Fifteen years of a dancer's life, with some account of her distinguished friends

Loie Fuller

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The fortunes of Nigel

Walter Scott

WITHDRAWN

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FIFTEEN YEARS OF A DANCER'S LIFE

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

Pholo

Langfier

LOIE FULLER

FIFTEEN YEARS OF A DANCER'S LIFE

WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF HER DISTINGUISHED FRIENDS

BY
LOIE
FULLER

WITH AN INTRODUCTION
BY
ANATOLE FRANCE

"SHE OUGHT TO WRITE OUT HER MEMORIES AND HER IMPRESSIONS." — *Alexandre Dumas*

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INTRODUCTION

I HAD seen her only as she had been seen by multitudes from every corner of the globe, on the stage, waving her draperies in the first light, or transformed into a great resplendent lily, revealing to us a new and dignified type of beauty. I had the honour of being presented to her at a luncheon of the *tour du monde* at Boulogne. I saw an American lady with small features, with blue eyes, like water in which a pale sky is reflected, rather plump, quiet, smiling, refined. I heard her talk. The difficulty with which she speaks French adds to her power of expression without injuring her vivacity. It obliges her to rely on the rare and the exquisite, at each moment to create the requisite expression, the quickest and best turn of speech. Her words gush forth, the unaccustomed linguistic form shapes itself. As assistance she employs neither gestures nor motions, but only the expression of her eyes, which changes like the landscapes that are disclosed along a beautiful highway. And the

basis of her conversation, now smiling and now serious, is one of charm and delightfulness.

This brilliant artist is revealed as a woman of just and delicate sensibility, endowed with a marvellous perception of spiritual values. She is one who is able to grasp the profound significance of things that seem insignificant, and to see the splendour hidden in simple lives. Gleefully she depicts, with keen and brilliant stroke, the humble folk in whom she finds some ennobling and magnifying beauty. Not that she is especially devoted to the lowly, the poor in spirit. On the contrary she enters easily into the lives of artists and scholars. I have heard her say the most delicate, the subtlest things about Curie, Mme. Curie, Auguste Rodin and other geniuses. She has formulated, without desiring to do so, and perhaps without knowing it, a considerable theory of human knowledge and philosophy of art.

But the subject of conversation which comes closest to her is *religious* research. Should we recognize in this fact a characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon race, of the effect of a Protestant education, or simply a peculiarity of temperament of which there is no explanation ? I do not know. At all events she is profoundly religious, with a very acute spirit of inquiry and a perpetual anxiety about

human destiny. Under various guises, in various ways, she has asked me about the cause and the final outcome of things. I need not say that none of my replies were couched in a manner to satisfy her. Nevertheless she has received my doubts serenely, smiling at everything. For she is distinctly an amiable being.

As regards understanding? Comprehension? She is marvellously intelligent. She is even more marvellously instinctive. Rich in so many natural gifts she might have become a scholar. I have heard her employ a very comprehensive vocabulary in discussing the various subjects of astronomy, chemistry and physiology. But it is the unconscious in her that counts. She is an artist.

I have been unable to resist the pleasure of recalling my first meeting with this extraordinary and delightful woman. What a rare chance! You admire afar off, as in a vision, an airy figure comparable in grace to those dancers whom one sees on Pompeiian wall paintings, moving in their light draperies. Some day you discover once again this apparition in real life, softened in colour and hidden under those thicker robes with which mortals cover themselves, and you perceive that she is a person of good mind and good heart, a soul somewhat inclined to mysticism, to philosophy,

to religion, a very deep, a very cheerful and a very noble soul.

There you have to the life this Loie Fuller, in whom our Roger Marx has hailed the chastest and most expressive of dancers, beautifully inspired, who reanimates within herself and restores to us the lost wonders of Greek mimicry, the art of those motions, at once voluptuous and mystical, which interpret the phenomena of nature and the life history of living beings.

ANATOLE FRANCE

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FIFTEEN YEARS OF A DANCER'S LIFE

I

MY STAGE ENTRANCE

"WHOSE baby is this?"

"I don't know."

"Well, anyway, don't leave it here. Take it away."

Thereupon one of the two speakers seized the little thing and brought it into the dancing-hall.

It was an odd little baggage, with long, black, curly hair, and it weighed barely six pounds.

The two gentlemen went round the room and asked each lady if the child were hers. None claimed it.

Meanwhile two women entered the room that served as dressing-room and turned directly toward the bed where, as a last resort, the baby had been put. One of them asked, just as a few minutes before the man in the dancing-hall had asked:

"Whose child is this?"

The other woman replied:

"For Heaven's sake what is it doing there? This is Lillie's baby. It is only six weeks old and she

brought it here with her. This really is no place for a baby of that age. Look out; you will break its neck if you hold it that way. The child is only six weeks old, I tell you."

At this moment a woman ran from the other end of the hall. She uttered a cry and grasped the child. Blushing deeply she prepared to take it away, when one of the dancers said to her :

" She has made her entrance into society. Now she will have to stay here."

From that moment until the end of the ball the baby was the chief attraction of the evening. She cooed, laughed, waved her little hands and was passed round the hall until the last of the dancers was gone.

I was that baby. Let me explain how such an adventure came about.

It occurred in January, during a very severe winter. The thermometer registered forty degrees below zero. At that time my father, my mother, and my brothers lived on a farm about sixteen miles from Chicago. When the occasion of my appearance in the world was approaching, the temperature went so low that it was impossible to heat our house properly. My mother's health naturally made my father anxious. He went accordingly to the village of Fullersburg, the population of which was composed almost exclusively of cousins and kinsmen, and made an arrangement with the proprietor of the only public-house of the

place. In the general room there was a huge cast-iron stove. This was, in the whole countryside, the only stove which seemed to give out an appreciable heat. They transformed the bar into a sleeping-room and there it was that I first saw light. On that day the frost was thick on the window panes and the water froze in dishes two yards from the famous stove.

I am positive of all these details, for I caught a cold at the very moment of my birth, which I have never got rid of. On my father's side I had a sturdy ancestry. I therefore came into life with a certain power of resistance, and if I have not been able to recover altogether from the effects of this initial cold, I have had the strength at all events to withstand them.

A month later we had returned to the farm, and the saloon resumed its customary appearance. I have mentioned that it was the only tavern in town, and, as we occupied the main room, we had inflicted considerable hardship upon the villagers, who were deprived of their entertainment for more than four weeks.

When I was about six weeks old a lot of people stopped one evening in front of our house. They were going to give a surprise party at a house about twenty miles from ours.

They were picking up everybody *en route,* and they stopped at our house to include my parents. They gave them five minutes in which to get

ready. My father was an intimate friend of the people whom they were going to surprise; and, furthermore, as he was one of the best musicians of the neighbourhood he could not get out of going, as without him the company would have no chance of dancing. He accordingly consented to join the party. Then they insisted that my mother go, too.

"What will she do with the baby? Who will feed her?"

There was only one thing to do in these circumstances—take baby too.

My mother declined at first, alleging that she had no time to make the necessary preparations, but the jubilant crowd would accept no refusal. They bundled me up in a coverlet and I was packed into a sleigh, which bore me to the ball.

When we arrived they supposed that, like a well-brought-up baby, I should sleep all night, and they put me on the bed in a room temporarily transformed into a dressing-room. They covered me carefully and left me to myself.

There it was that the two gentlemen quoted at the beginning of this chapter discovered the baby agitating feet and hands in every direction. Her only clothing was a yellow flannel garment and a calico petticoat, which made her look like a poor little waif. You may imagine my mother's feelings when she saw her daughter make an appearance in such a costume.

That at all events is how I made my debut, at

the age of six weeks. I made it because I could not do otherwise. In all my life everything that I have done has had that one starting-point; I have never been able to do anything else.

I have likewise continued not to bother much about my personal appearance.

II

MY APPEARANCE ON A REAL STAGE AT TWO YEARS AND A HALF

WHEN I was a very small girl the president of the Chicago Progressive Lyceum, where my parents and I went every Sunday, called on my mother one afternoon, and congratulated her on the appearance I had made the preceding Sunday at the Lyceum. As my mother did not understand what he meant, I raised myself from the carpet, on which I was playing with some toys, and I explained :

" I forgot to tell you, mamma, that I recited my piece at the Lyceum last Sunday."

" Recited your piece?" repeated my mother. " What does she mean ? "

" What ! " said the president, " haven't you heard that Loie recited some poetry last Sunday ? "

My mother was quite overcome with surprise. I threw myself upon her and fairly smothered her with kisses, saying,

" I forgot to tell you. I recited my piece."

" Oh, yes," said the president, " and she was a great success, too."

My mother asked for explanations.

The president then told her : " During an interval between the exercises, Loie climbed up on the platform, made a pretty bow as she had seen orators do, and then, kneeling down, she recited a little prayer. What this prayer was I don't remember."

But my mother interrupted him.

" Oh, I know. It is the prayer she says every evening when I put her to bed."

And I had recited that in a Sunday School thronged by free-thinkers !

" After that Loie arose, and saluted the audience once more. Then immense difficulties arose. She did not dare to descend the steps in the usual way. So she sat down and let herself slide from one step to another until she reached the floor of the house. During this exercise the whole hall laughed loudly at the sight of her little yellow flannel petticoat, and her copper-toed boots beating the air. But Loie got on her feet again, and, hearing the laughter, raised her right hand and said in a shrill voice : ' Hush ! Keep quiet. I am going to recite my poem.' She would not stir until silence was restored. Loie then recited her poem as she had promised, and returned to her seat with the air of having done the most natural thing in the world."

The following Sunday I went as usual to the Lyceum with my brothers. My mother came, too, in the course of the afternoon, and took her seat

at the end of a settee among the invited guests who took no part in our exercises. She was thinking how much she had missed in not being there the preceding Sunday to witness my "success," when she saw a woman rise and approach the platform. The woman began to read a little paper which she held in her hand. After she had finished reading my mother heard her say :

"And now we are going to have the pleasure of hearing our little friend Loie Fuller recite a poem entitled : 'Mary had a little Lamb.'"

My mother, absolutely amazed, was unable to stir or to say a word. She merely gasped :

"How can this little girl be so foolish! She will never be able to recite that. She has only heard it once."

In a sort of daze she saw me rise from my seat, slowly walk to the steps and climb upon the platform, helping myself up with feet and hands. Once there I turned around and took in my audience. I made a pretty courtesy, and began in a voice which resounded throughout the hall. I repeated the little poem in so serious a manner that, despite the mistakes I must have made, the spirit of it was intelligible and impressed the audience. I did not stop once. Then I courtesied again and everybody applauded me wildly. I went back to the stairs and let myself slide down to the bottom, as I had done the preceding Sunday. Only this time no one made fun of me.

When my mother rejoined me, some time after, she was still pale and trembling. She asked me why I had not informed her of what I was going to do. I replied that I could not let her know about a thing that I did not know myself.

"Where have you learned this?"

"I don't know, mamma."

She said then that I must have heard it read by my brother; and I remembered that it was so. From this time on I was always reciting poems, wherever I happened to be. I used to make little speeches, but in prose, for I employed the words that were natural for me, contenting myself with translating the spirit of the things that I recited without bothering much over word-by-word renderings. With my firm and very tenacious memory, I needed then only to hear a poem once to recite it, from beginning to end, without making a single mistake. I have always had a wonderful memory. I have proved it repeatedly by unexpectedly taking parts of which I did not know a word the day before the first performance.

It was thus, for instance, when I played the part of Marguerite Gauthier in *La Dame aux Camélias* with only four hours to learn the lines.

On the Sunday of which I have been speaking, my mother experienced the first of the nervous shocks that might have warned her, had she been able to understand, that she was destined to

become the prey of a dreadful disease, which would never leave her.

From the spring which followed my first appearance at the Folies-Bergère until the time of her death she accompanied me in all my travels. As I was writing this, some days before her end, I could hear her stir or speak, for she was in the next room with two nurses watching over her night and day. While I was working I would go to her from time to time, rearrange her pillows a little, lift her, give her medicine, or some little thing to eat, put out her candle, open the window a moment, and then I would return to my task.

After the day of my debut at the Chicago Progressive Lyceum I continued my dramatic career. The incidents of my performances would suffice to fill several volumes. For without interruption, adventures succeeded one another to such an extent that I shall never undertake the work of describing them all.

I should say that when this first theatrical incident took place I was just two and a half years old.

III

HOW I CREATED THE SERPENTINE DANCE

IN 1890 I was on a tour in London with my mother. A manager engaged me to go to the United States and take the principal part in a new play entitled, "Quack, M.D." In this piece I was to play with two American actors, Mr. Will Rising and Mr. Louis de Lange, who has since then been mysteriously assassinated.

I bought what costumes I needed and took them with me. On our arrival in New York the rehearsals began. While we were at work, the author got the idea of adding to the play a scene in which Dr. Quack hypnotised a young widow. Hypnotism at that moment was very much to the fore in New York. To give the scene its full effect he needed very sweet music and indeterminate illumination. We asked the electrician of the theatre to put green lamps along the footlights and the orchestra leader to play a subdued air. The great question next was to decide what costume I was to wear. I was unable to buy a new one. I had spent all the money advanced me for my costumes and, not knowing what else to do, I

undertook to run over my wardrobe in the hope of finding something that would be fit to wear.

In vain. I could not find a thing.

All at once, however, I noticed at the bottom of one of my trunks a small casket, a very small casket, which I opened. Out of it I drew a light silk material, comparable to a spider's web. It was a skirt, very full and very broad at the bottom.

I let the skirt dangle in my fingers, and before this little heap of fragile texture I lingered in reverie for some time. The past, a past very near and yet already far away, was summoned up before me.

It had happened in London some months before.

A friend had asked me to dine with several officers who were being wined and dined just before leaving for India, where they were under orders to rejoin their regiment. The officers were in handsome uniforms, the women in low dresses, and they were pretty, as only English women are.

At table I was seated between two of the youngest officers. They had very long necks and wore extremely high collars. At first I felt myself greatly overawed in the presence of people so imposing as my neighbours. They looked snobbish and uncommunicative. Presently I discovered that they were much more timid than I, and that we should never be better acquainted unless one

or the other of us resolved to overcome his own nervousness and, at the same time, that of his companions.

But my young officers were afraid only in the presence of women. When I told them I hoped they might never be engaged in a war, and especially that they might never have to do any killing, one of them answered me very simply :

" I fancy I can serve as a target as well as any other man, and certainly the people who draw on me will understand that war is on."

They were essentially and purely English. Nothing could unsettle them, provoke them or change them in the least. At our table they seemed timid. They were nevertheless men of the kind who go into the presence of death just as one encounters a friend in the street.

At this period I did not understand the English as I have subsequently come to know them.

I left the table without remembering to ask the names of my neighbours, and when I thought about the matter it was too late.

I recalled, however, that one of them took the trouble, in the course of our conversation, to learn the name of the hotel at which I was staying. I had quite forgotten the incident when, some time after, I received a little casket, addressed to me from India.

It contained a skirt of very thin white silk, of a peculiar shape, and some pieces of silk gauze. The

box was not more than sixteen inches long and was hardly taller than a cigar box. It contained nothing else, not a line, not a card. How odd! From whom could it come?

I knew no one in India. All at once, however, I remembered the dinner and the young officers. I was greatly taken with my pretty box, but I was far from suspecting that it contained the little seed from which an Aladdin's lamp was destined to spring for my benefit.

This, of course, was the casket which I had just discovered in my trunk.

Deep in thought I stooped and gathered up the soft, silky stuff. I put on the Hindu skirt, the skirt sent me by my two young officers, those young men who must by this time have "served as targets" somewhere out there in the jungle, for I never heard from them again.

My robe, which was destined to become a triumphal robe, was at least a half a yard too long. Thereupon I raised the girdle and so shaped for myself a sort of empire robe, pinning the skirt to a décolleté bodice. The robe looked thoroughly original, perhaps even a little ridiculous. It was entirely suitable for the hypnotism scene, which we did not take very seriously.

We "tried the play on the dog" before offering it to the New York public, and I made my debut as a dancer at a theatre in a small city of which the average New Yorker had hardly heard. No one,

Photo *Savony*

LOIE FULLER IN HER ORIGINAL SERPENTINE DRESS

I suppose, outside its boundaries took the slightest interest in what went on in that city. At the end of the play, on the evening of the first presentation, we gave our hypnotism scene. The stage scenery, representing a garden, was flooded with pale green light. Dr. Quack made a mysterious entrance and then began his work of suggestion. The orchestra played a melancholy air very softly, and I endeavoured to make myself as light as possible, in order to give the impression of a fluttering figure obedient to the doctor's orders.

He raised his arms. I raised mine. Under the influence of suggestion, entranced—so, at least, it looked—with my gaze held by his, I followed his every motion. My robe was so long that I was continually stepping upon it, and mechanically I held it up with both hands and raised my arms aloft, all the while that I continued to flit around the stage like a winged spirit.

There was a sudden exclamation from the house :

" It's a butterfly ! A butterfly ! "

I turned on my steps, running from one end of the stage to the other, and a second exclamation followed :

" It's an orchid ! "

To my great astonishment sustained applause burst forth. The doctor all the time was gliding around the stage, with quickening steps, and I followed him faster and faster. At last, transfixed in a state of ecstasy, I let myself drop at his

feet, completely enveloped in a cloud of the light material.

The audience encored the scene, and then encored it again—so loudly and so often that we had to come back twenty times, or more.

We were on the road about six weeks. Then came our opening in one of the New York suburbs, where Mr. Oscar Hammerstein, who has since become a famous impresario, owned a theatre.

The play was unsuccessful, and even our hypnotism scene was not strong enough to save it from the attacks of the critics. No New York theatre cared to give it house room, and our company broke up.

The day after this opening at Mr. Hammerstein's theatre a local newspaper of the little community in which we had successfully presented this "Quack, M.D.," which the New York managers refused to touch, wrote a ridiculously enthusiastic article on what it called my "acting" in the hypnotism scene. But as the play had not "made good," no one thought that it would be possible to take a single scene out of it, and I was left without an engagement.

Nevertheless, even in New York, and in spite of the failure of the play, I personally secured some good press notices. The newspapers were in agreement in announcing that I had a remarkable string to my bow—if I only knew how to make the most of it.

I had brought my robe home to sew up a little tear. After reading these comforting lines I leaped from the bed and arrayed only in my night-gown, I put the garment on and looked at myself in a large glass, to make sure of what I had done the evening before.

The mirror was placed just opposite the windows. The long yellow curtains were drawn and through them the sun shed into the room an amber light, which enveloped me completely and illumined my gown, giving a translucent effect. Golden reflections played in the folds of the sparkling silk, and in this light my body was vaguely revealed in shadowy contour. This was a moment of intense emotion. Unconsciously I realised that I was in the presence of a great discovery, one which was destined to open the path which I have since followed.

Gently, almost religiously, I set the silk in motion, and I saw that I had obtained undulations of a character heretofore unknown. I had created a new dance. Why had I never thought of it before ?

Two of my friends, Mrs. Hoffmann and her daughter Mrs. Hossack, came from time to time to see how I was getting on with my discoveries. When I found an action or a pose which looked as if it might amount to something they would say : " Hold that. Try it again." Finally I reached a point where each movement of the body was

expressed in the folds of silk, in a play of colours in the draperies that could be mathematically and systematically calculated.

The length and size of my silk skirt would constrain me to repeat the same motion several times as a means of giving this motion its special and distinctive aim. I obtained a spiral effect by holding my arms aloft while I kept whirling, to right and then to left, and I continued this movement until the spiral design was established. Head, hands and feet followed the evolutions of the body and the robe. It is very difficult, however, to describe this part of my dance. You have to see it and feel it. It is too complicated for realisation in words.

Another dancer will obtain more delicate effects, with more graceful motions, but they will not be the same. To be the same they must be created in the same spirit. One thing original, though up to a certain point it is not so good as an imitation, is in reality worth much more.

I studied each of my characteristic motions, and at last had twelve of them. I classed them as Dances No. 1, No. 2, and so on. The first was to be given under a blue light, the second under red light, the third under a yellow light. For illumination of my dances I intended to have a lantern with coloured glass in front of the lens. I wanted to dance the last one in total darkness with a single ray of yellow light crossing the stage.

A SCEPTICAL MANAGER

When I had finished studying my dances, I went in search of a manager. I was acquainted with them all. During my career as singer and actress I had served all of them more or less frequently.

I was, however, hardly prepared for the reception which they gave me. The first one laughed me in the face as he said :

" You a dancer ! Well, that's too good ! When I want you for a theatrical part I'll look you up with pleasure ; but as for dancing, good heavens ! When I engage a dancer she will have to be a star. The only ones I know are Sylvia Gray and Lettie Lind in London. You cannot outclass them, take my word for it. Good-evening."

He had lost all respect for my perspicacity and he made fun of the idea of my being a dancer.

Mrs. Hoffmann had come with me, and was waiting in the lobby, where I rejoined her. She noted at once how pale and nervous I was. When we left the theatre it was night. We walked in silence through dark streets. Neither spoke. Some months later, however, my friend told me that all that evening I never stopped emitting little groans like those of a wounded animal. She saw that I was cut to the very quick.

Next day I had to continue my search, for necessity was spurring me on.

Mrs. Hoffmann offered me the privilege of coming to live with her and her daughter—an

offer which I accepted gratefully, not having the faintest idea when and how I could ever repay her.

Some time later I had to give in; since I was known as an actress, nothing could hurt me more than to try to become a dancer.

One manager went so far as to tell me that two years of absence from New York had caused the public completely to forget me, and that, in trying to recall myself to their memory, I should seem to be inflicting ancient history on them. As I had then just passed my twentieth birthday I was extremely irritated by that insinuation, and I thought: "Would it then be necessary for me painfully to build up a reputation and to look old to prove that I *was* young to-day?"

Unable to restrain my feelings any longer, I told the manager what I thought.

"Hell," he replied, "it isn't age that counts. It's the time the public has known you, and you have become too well known as an actress to come back here as a dancer."

Everywhere I encountered the same answer, and finally I became desperate. I was aware that I had discovered something unique, but I was far from imagining, even in a daydream, that I had hold of a principle capable of revolutionising a branch of æsthetics.

I am astounded when I see the relations that form and colour assume. The scientific admixture

of chemically composed colours, heretofore unknown, fills me with admiration, and I stand before them like a miner who has discovered a vein of gold, and who completely forgets himself as he contemplates the wealth of the world before him.

But to return to my troubles.

A manager who, some time before, had done his best to engage me as a singer, and who had absolutely refused to consider me as a dancer, gave a careless consent, thanks to the intervention of a common friend, to an interview at which I was to show him my dances.

I took my robe, which made a neat little bundle, and I set out for the theatre.

Mrs. Hoffmann's daughter accompanied me. We went in by the stage entrance. A single gas jet lighted the empty stage. In the house, which was equally dark, the manager, seated in one of the orchestra chairs, looked at us with an air of boredom, almost of contempt. There was no dressing-room for my change of clothing, not even a piano to accompany me. But the opportunity was a precious one, all the same. Without delay I put on my costume, there on the stage and over my dress. Then I hummed an air and started in to dance very gently in the obscurity. The manager came nearer and nearer, and finally ascended the platform.

His eyes glistened.

I continued to dance, disappearing in the dark-

ness at the rear of the stage, then returning toward the gas jet. Finally I lifted a part of my robe over my shoulders, made a kind of cloud which enveloped me completely and then fell, a wavering mass of fluffy silk, at the manager's feet. After that I arose and waited in keenest anxiety to hear what he would say.

He said nothing. Visions of success were crowding upon each other in his brain.

Finally he broke his silence and gave my dance the name of "The Serpentine Dance."

"There is the name that will go with it," he said, "and I have just the music that you need for that dance. Come to my private office. I am going to play it for you."

Then for the first time I heard an air which later became very popular, "Au Loin du Bal."

A new company was rehearsing "Uncle Celestin" at the theatre. This company was to go on the road for several weeks before playing in New York. My new manager offered me, for this tour, an engagement at fifty dollars a week. I accepted, making it a condition that I should be featured on the placards, in order to regain in a measure the prestige I had lost.

A few days after I joined the company and made my first appearance at a distance from New York. For six weeks I appeared before country audiences, feverishly counting the hours until I should at last have my chance in the big city.

During this tour, contrary to the conditions I had imposed, I was not featured. The posters did not even announce me, and yet my dance, which was given during an interval and without coloured lights, was successful from the first.

A month and a half later in Brooklyn its success was phenomenal. The week following I made my debut in New York, at what was one of the prettiest theatres in town.

There I was able for the first time to realise my dances just as I had conceived them; with darkness in the house and coloured lights on the stage. The house was packed and the audience positively enthusiastic. I danced my first, my second, my third. When I had finished the whole house was standing up.

Among the spectators was one of my oldest friends, Marshall P. Wilder, the little American humourist. He recognised me and called my name in such a way that everybody could hear it, for they had neglected to put it on the programme! When the audience discovered that the new dancer was its old favourite comedian, the little soubrette of a former day, it gave her an ovation such as, I suppose, never another human being has received.

They called out, "Three cheers for the butterfly! Three cheers for the orchid, the cloud, the butterfly! Three cheers!" And the enthusiasm passed all bounds. The applause resounded in

my ears like the ringing of bells. I was overcome with joy and gratitude.

Next morning I arose early to read the papers. Every New York newspaper devoted from a column to a page to "Loie Fuller's Wonderful Creation." Numerous illustrations of my dances accompanied the articles.

I buried my face in my pillow and shed every tear that, for a long time, had lurked in my discouraged soul. For how many months had I waited for this good luck!

In one of these articles a critic wrote "Loie Fuller had risen from her ashes." Next day the whole city was plastered with lithographs, reproduced from one of my photographs, representing me larger than life, with letters a foot high announcing: "The Serpentine Dance! The Serpentine Dance!" But there was one circumstance came near giving me heart failure. My name was nowhere mentioned.

I went to the theatre and reminded the manager that I had accepted the modest salary he offered on condition that I should be featured. I hardly understood when he remarked drily that he could not do more for me.

I asked him then whether he supposed that I was going to continue dancing under such conditions.

"Nothing can compel you to do so," answered the manager. "In any case, I have taken my precautions in case you do not care to keep on."

I left the theatre in desperation, not knowing what to do. My head swam. I went home and consulted my friends.

They advised me to go and see another manager, and, if I secured an engagement, simply to drop the other theatre.

I went to the —— Theatre, but on the way I began to cry, and I was in tears when I arrived there. I asked to see the manager, and told him my story.

He offered me one hundred and fifty dollars a week. I was to make my first appearance at once, and sign a contract dating from the next day.

On reaching home I asked if nothing had come for me from the other theatre.

Nothing had come.

That evening my friends went to the theatre, where they saw a poster announcing, for the following evening, the initial appearance in the "Serpentine" of Miss —— ——. When they told me that piece of news I understood that my six weeks on the road had been profitably employed by my manager and one of the chorus girls to meet just this situation, and I understood, too, why my name was not mentioned on the first posters.

They had stolen my dance.

I felt myself overcome, dead—more dead, as it seemed to me, than I shall be at the moment when my last hour comes. My very life depended on

this success, and now others were going to reap the benefit. I cannot describe my despair. I was incapable of words, of gestures. I was dumb and paralysed.

Next day, when I went to sign my new contract, the manager received me rather coldly. He was willing to sign only if I would give him the privilege of cancelling at his own discretion. He felt that my imitator at the Casino, announced for the same day, would diminish greatly the interest that would be felt in what he ironically called my " discovery."

I was obliged to accept the conditions which he imposed, but I experienced all the while an access of rage and grief as I saw in what a barefaced manner they had stolen my invention.

Heartbroken, with my courage oozing, I made my appearance at the Madison Square Theatre and, to my astonishment, to my immense satisfaction, I saw that the theatre had to turn people away. And it was that way as long as my engagement lasted.

As for the other theatre, after three weeks of featuring my imitator, it was obliged to close its doors to rehearse a new opera.

IV

HOW I CAME TO PARIS

A LITTLE while after my appearance at the Madison Square Theatre I was asked to dance for the benefit of a charity at the German theatre in New York. I had forgotten all about my promise until the day of the performance, when a card arrived to call it to my mind. I had neglected to ask my manager's permission to appear on that evening, not thinking that he would refuse to grant the privilege of my participating in a philanthropic affair.

A short time before there had taken place the first part of a painful incident which was destined to rupture the pleasant relations subsisting between the management of the Madison Square and myself. My manager's associate had asked me as a great favour to come to open a ball given by some friends in his honour. Delighted to be of service to him, I readily agreed to do so. When I asked him the date of this affair he told me not to bother about that.

It was just then that I asked permission to dance at the German theatre for the benefit of an actress who was ill. The manager consented. At the

German theatre they had engaged a Roumanian orchestra for me. The leader of this orchestra, Mr. Sohmers, an enthusiastic man, as the Roumanians are apt to be, came to see me after I had danced and foretold for me the wonderful artistic success which I was sure to meet with in Europe. He advised me to go to Paris, where an artistically inclined public would give my dances the reception they deserved. From that moment on this became a fixed idea with me—to dance in Paris. Then the manager of the German theatre proposed to me a tour abroad, beginning with Berlin.

I promised to think the matter over and acquaint him with my decision.

Some days later the famous ball took place which my manager's associate had asked me to open. I went to it.

They took us, a friend who accompanied me, and myself, into a little drawing-room where they begged me to wait until some one should come and fetch me for my appearance on the stage. More than an hour passed. Finally a gentleman came to tell me that everything was ready. Through a corridor I reached the platform, which had been erected at the top of the ball-room. It was terribly dark, and the only light perceptible was the little ray that filtered through from one of my lanterns that was imperfectly closed. The hall looked totally empty. I saw, when I had taken my bearings, that the whole audience was disposed

in the galleries, forming a balcony half-way up the room. The orchestra finished its overture and I began to dance. After having danced three times, as I was accustomed to do at the theatre, I returned to the scene to acknowledge the applause and I saw before me in luminous letters a sign with the words: "Don't think Club."

That looked queer to me, but I did not attach much importance to it. I bowed again to the magnificently gowned women and the men, who were all in sombre black, and then, walking through the same passage way, I once more reached the dressing-room, where I put on my outdoor clothes and left. At the door I entered the carriage that had brought me there, and while we were on our way home I kept wondering what the Don't Think Club could be.

That worried me in spite of myself.

The next morning my friend brought me a newspaper, in which I found on the first page a long article headed:

"LOIE FULLER OPENS THE DON'T THINK CLUB."

There followed a description of the affair and of the orgies which took place there. The article had been written with a deliberate purpose of creating a scandal. I was exasperated beyond measure. I had gone there merely to please my manager, and the humiliation inflicted upon me wounded me deeply.

Possibly he thought that I would never know where I had been. A single newspaper might print something about the affair; but most probably my manager thought it would never come to my notice. No newspaper men had been invited to the performance. There was one guest, a very little man but with a great reputation, who found himself among the invited, and he wrote the scandalous article, so I have been told.

I have since had my revenge, a terrible revenge; for this man, then at the climax of his career, so mismanaged his affairs and those of others, that he was imprisoned.

"Everybody is blaming him for the article," my manager explained to me when I reproached him for having dragged me to this club.

That was his only excuse. He thought he was lessening the insult by offering me more money. This offer so increased my anger that I tendered my resignation. I felt in no wise under obligation to a man who I thought had morally lost all right to consideration. This was the reason for my leaving, never to return.

The notion of going to Paris possessed me after that more completely than before. I wanted to go to a city where, as I had been told, educated people would like my dancing and would accord it a place in the realm of art.

I was making at this time one hundred and fifty dollars a week and I had just been offered five

hundred. I decided, nevertheless, to sign a contract with the manager of the German theatre that guaranteed me sixty-five dollars instead of five hundred. But the objective, after a tour in Europe, was Paris !

While I was dancing in New York I had to begin to invent special robes for my new dances. These were just being made and, when I was about to leave for Europe, they were ready.

The manager of the German Theatre had gone ahead and had reserved berths for us on one of the steamers.

After taking leave of my friends I was still full of hope and ambition. My mother in vain tried to share my feelings ; she could not avoid painful misgivings. As for me, I wanted to think only of the good things that awaited, and to forget all the past annoyances.

During the voyage an evening entertainment was organised for the benefit of the seamen and I agreed to dance. A stage was arranged by the bridge. There with the sea for a background and with the coloured lights used for signalling as the media of illumination, I tried for the first time a series of new dances, each with a special gown.

The enthusiasm of passengers and crew knew no bounds and I felt that I had taken my first step in the conquest of a new world.

We landed in Germany. My manager came to meet us and took us to Berlin. But, to my

great annoyance, I found that I was not to make my initial appearance for a month, and I could not discover in what city I was to make it.

That meant a month of inactivity.

Finally I learned that I was to make my debut, not at the Opera as my manager had promised, but in a music hall. The Opera was closed, and the music hall was the only place where I could dance.

In that event I would dance only my first dance and would exhibit only a single gown, just as I had done in New York. I then chose three of my numbers and prepared myself for my appearance. But this debut was made without personal interest. In America the best theatres offered me engagements on much better terms than those I had to accept in Europe. In Berlin I was obliged to appear where my New York manager wished. If, before signing the contract, he had told me where I should have to dance I should have declined. But when the time for my appearance was at hand I was without resources and quite at his mercy. To cap the climax my mother fell seriously ill.

At the time of which I am writing cholera had just broken out at Hamburg. My mother's illness came on so suddenly that it was thought she was stricken with cholera. Everybody at the hotel was frightened, and we were obliged to take my poor mother to the cholera hospital.

All these circumstances, conjoined with fright-

fully trying weather, put me in bad shape for the struggle. I renounced everything, my pride, my highest hopes, and I started in assiduously to gain our livelihood. But I was disabled and without courage.

After a month my German manager informed me he did not care to continue my contract. He was going back to the United States with a company that he had come for the express purpose of engaging in Germany. It seemed clear to me that his only motive in bringing me to Europe had been to procure the means with which to engage this new company and take it back with him. He travelled with his wife, a pretty American woman, who had become a close friend of mine, and who reproached him most bitterly on my account.

Our manager left Berlin with his company, leaving me with only just enough money to pay my bills at the hotel when I had completed the contract that held me to the music hall in Berlin. I then had absolutely no engagement in sight. I learned that he was getting ten thousand marks —about $2,500—a month for me. And yet he had given me only about $300 a month. What was I to do? My appearance in Berlin had been deplorable and was likely to have an unfortunate influence on my whole career in Europe. My purse was empty, my mother ill. We had not the slightest hope of an engagement and we had no one to help us.

A theatrical agent, an unknown man at that time, who has since become a theatrical manager, Mr. Marten Stein, came to see me, and I tried to continue at the music hall where I was dancing. I was obliged to make concessions to keep going a week or two more, to get money enough to go away and to look for a new engagement. I kept thinking more than ever of Paris. If I could only go there!

In these circumstances Mr. Marten Stein secured for me a dozen performances in one of the beer gardens at Altona, the well-known pleasure resort near Hamburg. I earned there several hundred marks, which allowed us to go to Cologne, where I had to dance in a circus between an educated donkey and an elephant that played the organ. My humiliation was complete. Since then, however, occasions have not been lacking when I have realised that the proximity of trained horses and music-mad elephants is less humiliating than intercourse with some human beings.

Finally I left for Paris.

To economise as closely as possible we had to travel third class. But what did that matter? That was only a detail. I was going to Paris to succeed there or to sink into obscurity.

V

MY APPEARANCE AT THE FOLIES-BERGÈRE

PARIS! Paris! At last Paris!

It seemed to me that I was saved and that all my troubles were coming to an end. Paris was the port after storm, the harbour of refuge after the furious rage of life's tempest. And I thought in my simplicity that I was going to conquer this great Paris that I had so long coveted.

In America I had often danced on important stages during the intervals between operatic acts, and I fancied that it would be the same in Paris.

Accordingly upon my arrival, which occurred in October, 1892, even before going to my room at the Grand Hotel, I instructed my agent, Mr. Marten Stein, to call upon M. Gailhard, manager of the National Academy of Music and Dancing, to whom I had written from Germany to propose my dancing at his theatre.

National Academy of Dancing!

I still believed, in my simple soul, in names. I fancied that an institution of this sort ought to be receptive of innovations in dancing.

My illusion, alas! was to be short-lived. Mr. Stein returned looking very downcast. He had been received by M. Pedro Gailhard, but that gentleman, in the deep voice which he has skilfully developed and which for twenty-one years has awakened the echoes of the directors' office at the Opera, did not conceal from him the fact that he had no great desire to engage me.

"Let her show me her dances if she cares to," he said, "but all I can do, in case these dances please me, would be, on condition of her performing nowhere else, to guarantee her a maximum of four performances a month."

"Four performances? That is hardly enough," my agent ventured to remark.

"It is too many for a dancer who before coming to Paris already has imitators here."

Influenced by the voice and bearing of a man who had formerly played the part of Mephistopheles on the stage which he now directed, Mr. Stein did not dare to make further inquiries.

The impression made upon me by the terms that my agent brought back is easily imagined. To accept four appearances a month, even if M. Gailhard actually made a proposition to that effect, was not to be thought of. That, from a pecuniary standpoint, was altogether insufficient. I thought the matter over. My mind was quickly made up. After dinner I bundled my agent and my mother into a carriage and gave the driver the

address of the Folies-Bergère, for I knew that my agent, on his own responsibility, had written to the manager of this big music-hall. On the way I explained to Mr. Stein that I was governing myself by the advice that he had given me sometime before, and that I was going to ask the manager of the Folies-Bergère for an engagement.

Imagine my astonishment when, in getting out of the carriage in front of the Folies, I found myself face to face with a "serpentine dancer" reproduced in violent tones on some huge placards. This dancer was not Loie Fuller.

Here was the cataclysm, my utter annihilation.

Nevertheless I went into the theatre. I stated the object of my visit. I asked to see the manager. They told me that I could be received only at the close of the performance, and they assigned us, my mother, Mr. Stein and myself, seats in one corner of the balcony, whence we were able to follow the performance.

The performance !

I could not help poking a little fun at that performance. It would be hard to describe what I saw that evening. I awaited the "serpentine dancer," my rival, my robber—for she was a robber, was she not, she who was stealing not only my dances but all my beautiful dreams ?

Finally she came out. I trembled all over. Cold perspiration appeared on my temples. I shut my eyes. When I reopened them I saw there on

the stage one of my contemporaries who, some time before, in the United States, having borrowed money from me had neglected to repay it. She had kept right on borrowing, that was all. But this time I had made up my mind to force her to give back what she had taken from me.

Presently I ceased to want to do anything of the sort. Instead of further upsetting me the sight of her soothed me. The longer she danced the calmer I became. And when she had finished her "turn," I began to applaud sincerely and with great joy.

It was not admiration that elicited my applause but an entirely opposite feeling. My imitator was so ordinary that, sure of my own superiority, I no longer dreaded her. In fact I could gladly have kissed her for the pleasure that her revelation of inefficiency gave me.

After the performance, when we were in the manager's presence, M. Marchand was then the man, I let him know how I felt, through the intermediation of Mr. Stein, who acted as interpreter.

The hall by this time was empty. There were only six of us on the stage; M. Marchand, his wife, the second orchestra leader, M. Henri Hambourg, Mr. Stein, my mother and I.

"Ask M. Marchand," I said to Mr. Stein, "why he has engaged a woman who gives a feeble copy of my dances when you wrote him from Berlin to propose his talking with me."

Instead of translating my question my "interpreter" replied:

"Are you really so sure of yourself? Have you forgotten that you have been proposing to dance at the Opera? Perhaps he knows about it."

"That doesn't matter," I replied. "Put the question to him just the same. And besides, this man doesn't know anything."

I learned afterwards that M. Marchand spoke English and understood it as well as Mr. Stein and I. He must have had great difficulty, that evening, in checking a longing to laugh. As a matter of fact he restrained it perfectly, for we were unable to detect it, and we did not discover that he was familiar with Shakespeare's language.

Mr. Stein forthwith translated my question.

"I engaged this dancer," replied M. Marchand in French, "because the Casino de Paris is announcing a serpentine dance and because I cannot afford to let them get ahead of me."

"But," I asked, "are there other dancers of this sort at Parisian theatres?"

"No. The one at the Casino has broken her engagement. But for my part I had already engaged your imitator. As you see, she is meeting with no great success, and I fancy that you will hardly achieve it either. Nevertheless, if you care to give me a rehearsal I am at your service."

"Thank you. You would like me to give you

a rehearsal so that a thief may steal some more of my dances!"

But my agent urged me so strongly to show the manager what my dances were like, especially as compared with those of my imitator, that I decided to do so.

I put on my robes, one after the other, and began to dance. The orchestra was composed of a single violin, and for illumination I had only the footlights.

When I had finished the manager made me come into his private office and proposed to engage me then and there. I was to make my appearance as soon as the other dancer had ended her engagement.

"No," I declared. "If I come to you this woman will have to go."

"But," he said, "I have engaged her. She cannot leave until the end of her agreement."

"You have only to pay her for her performances and she will go."

He objected then that lithographs, newspaper advertisements and other things had been prepared for her, and that, if she stopped dancing, the public might protest.

"Very well. In that case I will dance in her place, under her name, with her music, until you have arranged everything for my debut."

The next day he paid my imitator and she left the theatre.

That same evening I took her place and I was obliged to repeat her dance four or five times.

Then we set ourselves at work seriously upon rehearsals for my debut, which was announced to occur a week later.

After I had danced twice under my imitator's name the manager of the Folies-Bergère took me to the office of the Figaro.

I knew well that from the point of view of advertising this was an excellent idea, but I did not know until long after that my definite engagement had depended on the impression I created there. I have not forgotten that I owe my entire career to the memorable success I achieved on that occasion.

Eight days later the general rehearsal occurred, which ended only at four o'clock in the morning, and still I had been unable to complete my programme, comprising five dances: 1, the serpentine; 2, the violet; 3, the butterfly; 4, a dance the public later called the "white dance." As a finale I intended to dance with illumination from beneath, the light coming through a square of glass over which I hovered, and this was to be the climax of my dances. After the fourth number my electricians, who were exhausted, left me there unceremoniously.

I was unwilling to make my appearance without my last dance, but, in the face of my manager's threat to cancel our contract, I finally yielded.

Next day I was able, nevertheless, to rehearse this fifth dance, and at the time of the performance everything was ready for my initial appearance.

The enthusiasm of the audience grew progressively while I danced.

When the curtain fell after the fourth dance, the applause was deafening and the music that served as prelude to dance number five could not be heard. Upon the manager's order the curtain was raised again and again, and the plaudits continued to deafen us. I had to yield to the inevitable; it was impossible, and useless, to keep on dancing. The four dances, with the encores, had lasted forty-five minutes and, despite the stimulus of great success, I had reached the limit of my strength.

I looked at the manager and asked:

"How about the last one?"

"We don't need it. Those you have just danced have been enough to stir the audience up. Don't you hear the cheering?"

A moment later we were surrounded by a great crowd and I was almost dragged to my dressing-room.

From that day on I had adventure after adventure. Not until long afterward was I able to get the benefit of my fifth dance. Some years later I initiated at Paris the dance of the fire and the lily, and that once again at the Folies-Bergère. I remember an ovation very similar to that at

Phot. Lafitte.

THE DANCE OF FLAME

my first appearance. This time, however, I was no longer an unknown performer, as in 1892. I had numerous Parisian friends in the house. Many of them came upon the stage to congratulate me, and amongst them, Calvé. She took me in her arms, kissed me and said :

" It's wonderful ! Loie, you are a genius."

And two big tears coursed down her cheeks. I have never seen Calvé prettier than at that moment.

Well, that is the story of my first appearance in Paris.

VI

LIGHT AND THE DANCE

SINCE it is generally agreed that I have created something new, something composed of light, colour, music, and the dance, more especially of light and the dance, it seems to me that it would perhaps be appropriate, after having considered my creation from the anecdotal and picturesque standpoint, to explain, in more serious terms, just what my ideas are relative to my art, and how I conceive it both independently and in its relationship to other arts. If I appear to be too serious I apologise in advance.

I hope that this theoretical "essay" will be better received than a certain practical essay that I undertook, soon after my arrival in Paris, in the cathedral of Notre Dame.

Notre Dame! The great cathedral of which France is justly proud was naturally the objective of one of my earliest artistic pilgrimages, I may say of the very earliest. The tall columns, whose shafts, composed of little assembled columns, rise clear to the vaults; the admirable proportions of the nave; the choir, the seats of old carved oak,

and the railings of wrought iron—this harmonious and magnificent pile impressed me deeply. But what enchanted me more than anything else was the marvellous glass of the lateral rose windows, and even more, perhaps, the rays of sunlight that vibrated in the church, in various directions, intensely coloured, as a result of having passed through these sumptuous windows.

I quite forgot where I was. I took my handkerchief from my pocket, a white handkerchief, and I waved it in the beams of coloured light, just as in the evening I waved my silken materials in the rays of my reflectors.

Suddenly a tall imposing man, adorned with a heavy silver chain, which swung from an impressive neck, advanced ceremoniously toward me, seized me by the arm and led me toward the entrance, directing a conversation at me which I appreciated as lacking in friendliness although I did not understand a word. To be brief he dropped me on to the pavement. There he looked at me with so severe an expression that I understood his intention was never to let me enter the church again under any pretext.

My mother was as frightened as I was.

Just then a gentleman came along, who, seeing us completely taken aback, asked us what had happened. I pointed to the man with the chain, who was still wrathfully surveying us.

"Ask him about it," I said.

The gentleman translated the beadle's language to me.

" Tell that woman to go away ; she is crazy."

Such was my first visit to Notre Dame and the vexatious experience that my love of colour and light caused.

When I came to Europe I had never been inside an art museum. The life that I led in the United States had given me neither motive nor leisure to become interested in masterpieces, and my knowledge of art was hardly worth mentioning. The first museum whose threshold I crossed was the British Museum. Then I visited the National Gallery. Later I became acquainted with the Louvre and, in due course, with most of the great museums of Europe. The circumstance that has struck me most forcibly in regard to these museums is that the architects have not given adequate attention to considerations of light.

Thanks to this defect I get in most museums an impression of a disagreeable medley. When I look at the objects for some moments the sensation of weariness overcomes me, it becomes impossible to separate the things one from another. I have always wondered if a day will not come when this problem of lighting will be better solved. The question of illumination, of reflection, of rays of light falling upon objects, is so essential that I cannot understand why so little importance has been attached to it. Nowhere have I seen a

museum where the lighting was perfect. The panes of glass that let the light through ought to be hidden or veiled just as are the lamps that light theatres, then the objects can be observed without the annoyance of the sparkle of the window.

The efforts of the architect ought to be directed altogether in that direction—to the redistribution of light. There are a thousand ways of distributing it. In order that it may fulfil the desired conditions light ought to be brought directly to pictures and statues instead of getting there by chance.

Colour is disintegrated light. The rays of light, disintegrated by vibrations, touch one object and another, and this disintegration, photographed in the retina, is always chemically the result of changes in matter and in beams of light. Each one of these effects is designated under the name of colour.

Our acquaintance with the production and variations of these effects is precisely at the point where music was when there was no music.

In its earliest stage music was only natural harmony ; the noise of the waterfall, the rumbling of the storm, the gentle whisper of the west wind, the murmur of the watercourses, the rattling of rain on dry leaves, all the sounds of still water and of the raging sea, the sleeping of lakes, the tumult of the hurricane, the soughing of the wind, the dreadful roar of the cyclone, the crashing of the thunder, the crackling of branches.

Afterwards the singing birds and then all the animals emitted their various sounds. Harmony was there; man, classifying and arranging the sounds, created music.

We all know what man has been able to get from it since then.

Man, past master of the musical realm, is to-day still in the infancy of art, from the standpoint of control of light.

If I have been the first to employ coloured light, I deserve no special praise for that. I cannot explain the circumstance; I do not know how I do it. I can only reply, like Hippocrates whe he was asked what time was: "Ask it of me," he said; "and I cannot tell you; ask it not and I know it well."

It is a matter of intuition, of instinct, and nothing else.

Sight is perhaps the first, the most acute, of our senses. But as we are born with this sense sufficiently well developed to enable us to make good use of it, it is afterward the last that we try to perfect. For we concern ourselves with everything sooner than with beauty. So there is no reason for surprise that the colour sense is the last to be developed.

Yet, notwithstanding, colour so pervades everything that the whole universe is busy producing it, everywhere and in everything. It is a continued recurrence, caused by processes of

chemical composition and decomposition. The day will come when man will know how to employ them so delightfully that it will be hard to conceive how he could have lived so long in the darkness in which he dwells to-day.

Our knowledge of motion is nearly as primitive as our knowledge of colour. We say "prostrated by grief," but, in reality, we pay attention only to the grief; "transported with joy," but we observe only the joy; "weighed down by chagrin," but we consider only the chagrin. Throughout we place no value on the movement that expresses the thought. We are not taught to do so, and we never think of it.

Who of us has not been pained by a movement of impatience, a lifting of the eyebrows, a shaking of the head, the sudden withdrawal of a hand?

We are far from knowing that there is as much harmony in motion as in music and colour. We do not grasp the facts of motion.

How often we have heard it said: "I cannot bear this colour." But have we ever reflected that a given motion is produced by such and such music? A polka or a waltz to which we listen informs us as to the motions of the dance and blends its variations. A clear sparkling day produces upon us quite a different effect from a dull sad day, and by pushing these observations further we should begin to comprehend some more delicate effects which influence our organism.

In the quiet atmosphere of a conservatory with green glass, our actions are different from those in a compartment with red or blue glass. But usually we pay no attention to this relationship of actions and their causes. These are, however, things that must be observed when one dances to an accompaniment of light and music properly harmonised.

Light, colour, motion and music.

Observation, intuition, and finally comprehension.

Let us try to forget educational processes in so far as dancing is concerned. Let us free ourselves from the sense that is ordinarily assigned to the word. Let us endeavour to forget what is understood by it to-day. To rediscover the primitive form of the dance, transformed into a thousand shapes that have only a very distant relationship to it, we shall have to go back to the early history of the race. We then get a notion what the origin of the dance must have been and what has made it what it is to-day.

At present dancing signifies motions of the arms and legs. It means a conventional motion, at first with one arm and one leg, then a repetition of the same figure with the other arm and the other leg. It is accompanied by music, each note calls for a corresponding motion, and the motion, it is unnecessary to say, is regulated rather by the time than by the spirit of the music. So much the

worse for the poor mortal who cannot do with his left leg what he does with his right leg. So much worse for the dancer who cannot keep in time, or, to express it better, who cannot make as many motions as there are notes. It is terrifying to consider the strength and ability that are needed for proficiency.

Slow music calls for a slow dance, just as fast music requires a fast dance.

In general, music ought to follow the dance. The best musician is he who can permit the dancer to direct the music instead of the music inspiring the dance. All this is proved to us by the natural outcome of the motives which first impelled men to dance. Nowadays these motives are forgotten, and it is no longer considered that there should be a reason for dancing.

In point of fact the dancer on hearing a piece of new music, says: "Oh, I cannot dance to that air." To dance to new music, the dancer has to learn the conventional steps adapted to that music.

Music, however, ought to indicate a form of harmony or an idea with instinctive passion, and this instinct ought to incite the dancer to follow the harmony without special preparation. This is the true dance.

To lead us to grasp the real and most extensive connotation of the word dance, let us try to forget what is implied by the choregraphic art of our day.

What is the dance? It is motion.

What is motion? The expression of a sensation.

What is a sensation? The reaction in the human body produced by an impression or an idea perceived by the mind.

A sensation is the reverberation that the body receives when an impression strikes the mind. When the tree bends and resumes its balance it has received an impression from the wind or the storm. When an animal is frightened its body receives an impression of fear, and it flees and trembles or else stands at bay. If it be wounded, it falls. So it is when matter responds to immaterial causes. Man, civilised and sophisticated, is alone best able to inhibit his own impulses.

In the dance, and there ought to be a word better adapted to the thing, the human body should, despite conventional limitations, express all the sensations or emotions that it experiences. The human body is ready to express, and it would express if it were at liberty to do so, all sensations just as the body of an animal.

Ignoring conventions, following only my own instinct, I am able to translate the sensations we have all felt without suspecting that they could be expressed. We all know that in the powerful emotions of joy, sorrow, horror, or despair, the body expresses the emotion it has received from the mind. The mind serves as a medium and

causes these sensations to be caught up by the body. In fact, the body responds to these sensations to such an extent sometimes that, especially when the shock is violent, life is suspended or even leaves the body altogether.

But natural and violent movements are possible only in the midst of grand or terrible circumstances. They are only occasional motions.

To impress an idea I endeavour, by my motions, to cause its birth in the spectator's mind, to awaken his imagination, that it may be prepared to receive the image.

Thus we are able, I do not say to understand, but to feel within ourselves as an impulse an indefinable and wavering force, which urges and dominates us. Well, I can express this force which is indefinable but certain in its impact. I have motion. That means that all the elements of nature may be expressed.

Let us take a "*tranche de vie.*" That expresses surprise, deception, contentment, uncertainty, resignation, hope, distress, joy, fatigue, feebleness, and, finally, death. Are not all these sensations, each one in turn, humanity's lot? And why can not these things be expressed by the dance, guided intelligently, as well as by life itself? Because each life expresses one by one all these emotions. One can express even the religious sensations. Can we not again express the sensations that music arouses in us, either a nocturne of

Chopin's or a sonata of Beethoven's, a slow movement by Mendelssohn, one of Schumann's lieder, or even the cadence of lines of poetry ?

As a matter of fact, motion has been the starting point of all effort at self-expression, and it is faithful to nature. In experiencing one sensation we cannot express another by motions, even when we can do so in words.

Since motion and not language is truthful, we have accordingly perverted our powers of comprehension.

That is what I have wanted to say and I apologise for having said it at such length, but I felt that it was necessary.

VII

A JOURNEY TO RUSSIA—A BROKEN CONTRACT

SOON after I had made my first appearance at the Folies-Bergère a Russian manager, in accordance with an arrangement with my Parisian manager, M. Marchand, asked to engage me, and I signed with him for St. Petersburg.

My engagement was for the following spring.

At the end of the winter, in April, on the very day on which we were to leave for Russia, my mother tottered and would certainly have fallen if I had not been there to support her. I asked what was the matter. She didn't know, but for some time she had been suffering. She went to bed, saying :

" I cannot go. But you take the train so as not to disappoint your people, and I will follow you to-morrow morning."

I was unwilling, however, to leave her in such a condition. The manager of the Folies-Bergère, who had acted as intermediary between the Russian manager and myself, had come to the station to say good-bye. When he saw that I had missed the

train he came to our house and "showed off." Meantime, I had called in a local physician, who could not tell me what was the trouble with my mother. As he was French I understood only that she was very ill. My mother's condition grew worse and I made up my mind not to leave her.

Next day M. Marchand returned, and this time with representatives of the police. They compelled me to dress myself and then took me down to the station, where, almost by main force, they put me on the train along with my electricians.

Despite my explicit resolutions of the night before, there I was on my way to Russia!

At the first stopping-place I left the train and boarded one which took me back to Paris. I found my mother much worse, and I begged the doctor to mention my name to no one.

I had engaged a nurse to watch over my mother. For two days I hid whenever anyone came, to such an extent did I feel myself in the hands of the Philistines.

When the train arrived at St. Petersburg and the electricians discovered that I was not there, more trouble ensued.

The Russian manager wired Paris, and I was unable to keep my secret any longer. This time, taking advantage of my ignorance both of the law and of the French language, they threatened to arrest me and imprison me if I did not start for

Photo *Ira L. Hill*

LOIE FULLER AND HER MOTHER

Russia at once. All that was under the pretext that I had taken money in advance. I was actually accused of being a thief.

This whole scene took place in my mother's presence. We were both nearly dead with fright. My mother begged me to go. With my heart full of bitterness, and my eyes sore from crying, I allowed myself to be dragged away a second time and placed in the train.

After my departure a young Englishwoman, whom I had met only once or twice, came to call at our *appartement*, and finding my mother very ill, went, on her own initiative, and summoned an English physician, Dr. John Chapman, who had attended us before, and whom she had met at our house. I had not called him because I supposed that the physician whom I had engaged would be just as competent to cure my mother sufficiently for her to be able to go with me to St. Petersburg.

Dr. Chapman arrived just at the moment when the French physicians (the doctor who was attending my mother had called three of his colleagues into consultation) had decided to give her a soporific on the ground that she was dying of pneumonia and that nothing could save her. The English doctor offered to attend my mother, and the Frenchmen retired when they learned that he was our regular physician.

Dr. Chapman inquired after me, and when he

was informed about what had happened wired me all along the line, at each station where the train was scheduled to stop. He maintained that they ought never to have let me go.

Just as I reached the Russian border the telegram was brought to me: "Return at once. Your mother has very little chance of recovering."

This was the first news to reach me since my departure, forty-eight hours before. It was six o'clock in the morning and still dark. I was in bed in the sleeping car and it was cold, as it can be cold only in Russia.

The conductor knew no English and I spoke no language but my own. I was unable to make him understand that I wished to know when I could leave the train and return to Paris. I dressed myself hastily, packed my things helter skelter and, when the train arrived at the next station, I alighted with all my baggage. What a bare and desolate spot! It was a little station, with hardly a platform. Away the train went rumbling, leaving me there in that wilderness. What was I to do? I had no idea. I banged on the door of the wooden hovel that served as a station. It was closed. For a long time, a very long time, shivering with cold, grief and anguish, I walked up and down in the darkness like a caged beast. Finally a man appeared out of the night. He swung a lantern, which made a little round spot of light in the gloom. He opened the door and I

followed him into the hut. I presented myself at the ticket office and tried to make him understand that I wanted a ticket for Berlin. I offered him French currency. He handed it back to me. I managed to understand that he would take only Russian money and also that the train that would get me back to Berlin was not due for three or four hours. Then I waited for day to break, hoping that perhaps some one would come who could help me. Towards nine o'clock some people arrived and among them I noticed an old fellow in whom I recognised the traditional Polish Jew, a money-lender I was sure, with his long black coat, his big round hat, his beard and his crafty smile.

I went to him and asked if he knew any English.

He did not know a word.

He tried to speak French and then German, but I failed to understand what he said. I succeeded in making him understand that I wanted to go to Berlin, and that the railway employee would not accept my French banknote. This bill of a thousand francs and a little ready money were all I had with me.

My interpreter took possession of the thousand francs, secured a ticket for Berlin for me and then disappeared for the purpose of changing my bill. I did not think of following him, although he bore my whole fortune away with him.

The man was a thief. He never came back. I realised in an ecstasy of fright, when the train

arrived, that there I was without money enough to purchase a ticket from Berlin to Paris. At the first station I telegraphed to some acquaintances whom I had met in Berlin, but on whom I could hardly count and who very likely were not at the German capital just then. I begged them, at all hazards, to come to the station and bring me a little money so that I could continue my journey.

At this point begins the strange part of my adventure. I was alone in my compartment when we crossed the Russian border. Weighed down with dejection, I sat on the carpet of the carriage, with my head resting heavily on the woodwork, crying as if my heart would break. At the first stop a priest entered. Although I had quickly raised myself and wiped my face with my handkerchief, he saw at once that I was in trouble. He came and sat down opposite to me, and I noticed by his expression that he was disturbed by my suffering. Tears again flooded my cheeks and I told him that my mother was dying in Paris. He repeated the words "mother" and "ill" in German. He extended his hand to bid me not to speak for a minute. He closed his eyes and I looked at him. Everything subsided within me. I awaited for a miracle. The miracle took place.

After ten minutes, which seemed to me an age, he opened his eyes and said to me in German :

"No, no, your mother will not die."

I understood what he said, catching the words "mother" and "not." The frightful sense of oppression that was torturing me disappeared. I perceived that his words were not in vain, that he spoke the truth and that my mother was not going to die. I stopped crying, feeling sure that now everything would come out all right.

Presently he left me, and I understood, from his manner of speaking, that he was trying to give me courage and hope.

When he was no longer there my fears returned, and I found myself again as unhappy as before. I seemed to see my mother stretched before me in death. I saw once more the horrible men who dragged me to the station. I hated them wildly, and I fell into convulsive tremblings, which shook me from head to foot.

In this condition I reached Berlin. Luckily my friends were at the station. Before my arrival they had even telegraphed to Paris to learn the news. A reply had come to them that my poor mother was hovering between life and death. I still had twenty-four hours of waiting and anxiety.

When I arrived in Paris I perceived at once the beautiful white beard, the pale and weary face of Dr. Chapman, whose tall form rose above the crowd. He took me in his arms, and said:

"She is still alive. Come."

In the carriage he gave me this advice:

"Enter the room and speak to your mother just

as if you had never gone away. Your presence will save her."

And that is what happened. From the moment of my return she began to improve. But this illness left her very weak. She had a first attack of paralysis and her trouble gained imperceptibly upon her, leaving each day less hope of her recovery.

She was destined, without ever being restored to health, to die in Paris in February, 1908.

In Russia they started a long lawsuit against me for not having kept my agreement, and before it was ended I lost, including other offers, which I could not accept without my electrical apparatus and my costumes that were held as security, fully 250,000 francs. During my second season at the Folies-Bergère, when, through the solicitude of M. Marchand, my dressing-room was always filled with flowers by reason of the distinguished visitors who came to see me and to whom the directors would offer champagne, an attachment was put upon my receipts and we often had hardly enough to eat. But for the manager's wife, who at times sent us things to eat in a basket, I should often have danced on an empty stomach, and have sipped champagne in my dressing-room without having had anything to eat at home.

My work on the stage was so fatiguing that when I had finished dancing the mechanicians would carry me to my *appartement*, which was connected

with the theatre. I continued this work for a whole season without being sufficiently well fed to keep up my strength, and being all the while in an *appartement* the sanitation of which was defective. Therein, I am certain, lay one of the reasons for the progress of my mother's illness. My health, too, was affected to such an extent that I am no longer able to endure fatigue as I once endured it.

However, it all happened as a result of circumstances, and I have no wish to blame anybody.

The manager of the theatre had given me this *appartement* and had had it arranged specially for me in order that I might not be obliged to go out into the street, heated with dancing.

Since then I have never returned to Russia, for every time that a journey to that country was mentioned my poor mother trembled with fright, and there was never any question of my undertaking it.

This adventure at least caused me to believe in one thing—inspiration. For if the priest in the railway compartment was not inspired, then what was he ?

VIII

SARAH BERNHARDT—THE DREAM AND THE REALITY

I WAS scarcely sixteen years old. I was then playing *ingenue* roles on the road, when on the theatrical horizon there appeared the announcement that the greatest tragedienne of modern times, Sarah Bernhardt, the most distinguished of French actresses, was about to come to America! What an event! We awaited it with feverish curiosity, for the divine Sarah was not a human being like the rest of us. She was a spirit endowed with genius.

The circumstance which made my heart throb and caused me to shed tears copiously was that I was uncertain of being able to see this wonderful fairy of the stage. I knew beforehand that there would be no seat for one so insignificant as I was. The newspapers were printing column upon column about her, and I read everything that I could get hold of. The papers said that the seats were all bought up, and that not a hundredth part of those who wanted to see her would achieve their ambition. The box office was besieged by speculators. All that, alas! meant that there was

scarcely any hope for me. I do not know whether Sarah had visited America before, for I had all along been on the road with little travelling companies in the Western States. So far as I was concerned this was positively her first visit.

At last the famous day arrived. A steamer, with delegations and an orchestra aboard, went down the bay to meet her. All that impressed me greatly. I saw in it genuine homage rendered to genius. She had come at last. She was here. If I could only see her, even from a distance—from a great distance!

But where and how? I did not know, and I kept on reading the papers, fairly intoxicating myself with the articles describing her. It seemed magic, unreality, a fairy tale.

Finally she gave her first performance. The public and critics appeared to rave over her,—absolutely to rave.

The actors and actresses of New York circulated a petition, begging her to give a matinee in order that they might honour her and observe her glorious art.

Wonder of wonders, she accepted! My mind was quickly made up.

Very recently come to New York, my mother and I were strangers in the big city. But fortunately I had plenty of courage without knowing it. When I learned that Sarah was going to play

for the benefit of her fellow-artists, I said to my mother: "Well, now, I am going to see her."

"There are so many famous artists in New York," my mother replied, "how do you suppose that you can get seats?"

I had not thought of that, so I jumped up, saying:

"Then I had better hurry up."

"How will you go about it?" asked my mother.

I paused a moment to think the matter over.

"I don't know," I replied, "but in some way or other I must see her. I am going to her theatrical manager."

"But he won't receive you."

Of that I had not thought, either. But I would not hear of any obstacles. Besides, out West I had never been treated that way. I was not yet fully aware that people in the West were simpler and more approachable than in New York.

The objection, therefore, did not appear to me a formidable one, and I started out with my mother, who always went with me and who obeyed me in everything without my having the faintest idea but that I was the obedient one.

Here we were, then, on our way; and, after half an hour's walking, we reached the theatre. The manager had not yet arrived. We sat down to wait for him. A lot of people came in. Some of them stayed for a while. Others went away at once.

They were all excited, busy and looked worried. What were they after ? Were they going to get all the tickets ? The crowd kept increasing to such an extent that I saw my poor tickets grow smaller and smaller in perspective and then disappear altogether. And I had counted so much on them !

Would the manager never come ?

At last a great commotion was heard. A group of gentlemen rushed by like the wind and, without stopping to see what was going on, disappeared behind a door on which was written "No admission."

None of us knew what to do after that. Everybody stared at everybody else. Most of those who were cooling their heels in the ante-chamber were men. My exhausted nerves would not let me linger any longer, and I said in a whisper to my mother :

"I am going to knock on the door."

She turned pale, but I had no choice in the matter. This was the only way to come to something, even if I ran the risk of heart failure from an organ that was beating so loudly that I thought it was on the point of bursting.

My head was in a whirl and I saw nothing for a moment. Nevertheless I approached the door and gave a gentle knock.

I felt as if I had committed a crime, this little rap resounded so loudly in my ears. A command

to enter that sounded lugubrious was the response, and I opened the door.

Mechanically I came forward and found myself in the middle of a group of gentlemen without knowing which of them to address. Overcome with embarrassment I stood erect in the centre of the room while everybody looked me over. Then I summoned all my courage and I said, to the whole circle :

" Gentlemen, I should like to see the manager of this theatre, if you please."

When I stopped speaking my teeth began to chatter so loudly that I bit my tongue.

A gentleman who looked more important than the others came forward and said :

" What do you want of him, little girl ? "

Good heavens, must I speak again before all these people ? To my own astonishment, I heard, as if it were somebody else's, my own voice saying in a firm tone :

" Well, it is this way, sir. I am an artist, and I should like to come with my mother to the matinee that Sarah Bernhardt is going to give us."

" Who are you, and where are you playing ? "

At this point the tone lost its assurance, while the voice replied :

" You probably don't know my name, sir. It isn't well known here. It's Loie Fuller. I have come from the West, to try and find an engage-

ment. I'm not playing anywhere just now, but I think that—it is of no importance anyway—and that perhaps you will let me just the same—see her—if I beg it of you."

"Where is your mother?"

"There, outside," and I pointed to the door.

"The pale lady, with the sweet expression?"

"Yes, sir. She is pale because she is afraid."

"And you, are you afraid, too?"

The firm voice reappeared.

"No, sir."

He looked at me, a slightly ironical smile played on his lips, and he said:

"Then you think that you are an artist?"

His remark cut me to the quick, but I felt that I must endure everything. I experienced, nevertheless, a great temptation to cry.

My assurance reasserted itself.

"I have never thought that," I replied. "But I should like to become an artist, some day, if I am able."

"And that is why you are anxious to see the great French tragedienne play?"

"Yes, I suppose so. But I was thinking only of my longing to see her, and it was on that account that I came here."

"Very well, I am going to give you seats for yourself and your mother."

"Oh, thank you, sir."

The manager drew a card from his pocket, wrote

something on it and handed it to me. It was a permit for us to see Sarah Bernhardt play!

I looked at the card and looked at the manager. He smiled and I smiled. He extended his hand. I extended both of mine. While he held my hands he said to me:

"You have my card. Come and see me. Perhaps I can find you an engagement, little girl."

There was a new pleasure, and not a vain pleasure, for this man's promise was one that was destined to be fulfilled.

"Thank you, thank you very much, sir."

I went out blinded with tears of happiness, which I could no longer restrain, and, rejoining my mother, I left the theatre.

"What's the matter, my dear Loie? What did they say to make you cry so? What is it?"

"Mamma, mamma, I have a ticket to see her—to see her!"

"Oh, I am so pleased, my dear."

"And I have a seat for you, too!"

The great day came. We were seated, my mother and I, in the orchestra stalls. About us there were American artists. In the boxes were the managers of all the New York theatres and their wives. The house was filled to overflowing. The three bangs announced the rising of the curtain. Silence ensued and the play began. I did not understand a word and no one around me, I fancy, did, either. But everybody awaited

the culminating moment. *She* appeared, and there was an almost painful silence in the great overcrowded hall. Every one held his breath. She came forward lightly, appearing barely to brush the earth. Then she stopped in the middle of the stage, and surveyed this audience of actors.

Suddenly pandemonium was let loose. Madness fell upon the house, and for a quarter of an hour she stood thus, prevented from playing by the din of the theatre, as if she were the audience. She looked round, interested, inspired and moved. This tumultuous crowd was playing with magnificent sincerity a part of indescribable enthusiasm.

Finally silence was restored. Sarah Bernhardt came forward and began to read her lines. I believe I understood her soul, her life, her greatness. She shared her personality with me!

The stage settings were lost on me. I saw and heard only her.

There was frantic applause, encore after encore following each scene. Then the curtain fell on the final scene, only to be followed by a great uproar. Then the audience went out slowly, as if regretting to leave the surroundings.

While I went away a golden voice—*the* golden voice—seemed still to resound in my ears, uttering words which I could not understand: "Je t'aime! je t'aime!" They were like the notes of a crystal bell resounding in my consciousness.

Who would have thought at that time that

the poor little Western girl would one day come to Paris, would appear there on a stage, in her turn before an audience trembling with enthusiasm, and that Sarah Bernhardt would be in the house for the purpose of applauding this little Western girl, just as the little Western girl had applauded her to-day ?

I was dancing at the Folies-Bergère. At a matinee some one came to say that Sarah Bernhardt was in a box with her little daughter. Did I dream ? My idol was there. And to see me ! Could this be possible ?

I came on to the stage and looked over the audience, which was filling the hall above and below. Standing quietly, in my great white robe, I waited for the end of the applause.

I danced and, although she could not know it, I danced for her. I forgot everything else. I lived again through the famous day in New York, and I seemed to see her once more, marvellous as she was at the matinee. And now here was a matinee to which she had come for the purpose of seeing me—*my* idol, to see *me*.

I finished.

She rose in her box, she leaned forward toward me to applaud—and to applaud again. The curtain rose several times. My brain was in a whirl. Was this real ? Was it ? Was it she ?

It was my turn to become the audience and, as

I saw only her, *her* audience. And that is how she played to my profound, my perfect gratification, the part of the whole house.

One day a friend took me to Sarah Bernhardt's house. It was a real visit, but it seemed to me nevertheless like a dream. I was scarcely able to speak or to breathe. I could hardly presume to look at her. I was in the presence of my divinity.

Later she invited me to have lunch with her, as a result of my begging her to be photographed by one of the best photographers of San Francisco, who had crossed the ocean expressly to take Sarah Bernhardt in her wonderful studio. She had consented. I had taken my compatriot to her, and she had posed for him very graciously. He was so pleased with his good luck, so grateful, the dear fellow!

Sarah had asked me to come and lunch with her on the day when he was to show her the proofs.

Exactly at noon I made my entrance. Very shortly after she appeared in the great studio, took me in her arms and imprinted a kiss on each of my cheeks. All that was so simple, so natural and yet so extraordinary.

We had luncheon, Sarah at the end of the table, with her back to the window, seated in a magnificent chair, as it were in some carved throne, whose

back overtopped her head like a halo of gold. Sarah was my divinity once more. I was seated on her right. There were several other invited guests whose names I have forgotten, my mind was so full of her. Her voice rang in my ears. I understood not a word of what she was saying, but every syllable made me thrill.

All at once the photographer was announced. Sarah bade him enter. He was a nice elderly gentleman of about sixty, with pretty white curly hair. He looked well pleased with himself. He approached Sarah, and placed in her outstretched hands a packet of proofs of the photographs he had taken. She looked at them slowly, one by one. Then, her golden voice broke forth in shrill notes that gave me a sinking feeling. I did not know what she was saying, but I saw her tear the photographs into a thousand and one shreds and hurl them at the feet of my fellow-countryman. He knew no French. Pale and disturbed, he asked me to translate what Sarah said. But she gave me no time to reply. She cried, this time in English : " Horrible ! Horrible ! "

" What does she say ? " he asked, making a trumpet of his hand about one ear.

Thank Heaven, he was deaf ! I signalled to him to bend down toward me so that I might whisper in his ear.

" She says these portraits are unworthy of your work. She has seen some of your really wonderful

photographs. You will have to come again and make another attempt."

"Oh, that's it, is it?" he replied with a joyful smile on his lips. "She is quite right. The photographs are not good. But the weather was to blame. It wasn't bright enough, and these are interiors. We shall have to make efforts several times in order to succeed. Do you want to make another appointment?"

I promised, but without hope, and solely because out of kindness I had to promise.

He grasped my divinity's hand and mine, and went away.

Sarah was destined on that day to cause me a happy surprise. She consented, when I asked it of her, to sit again, and I was sorry that the old man was not there, she was so grieved on account of the pain for which she was responsible. She really was grieved, and that made me love her all the more. Her temper, too keen, too glowing, had just resulted in a ruinous flare-up. And now here was this same fiery disposition manifesting itself sweet and kind.

One day in London I went to a banquet of fifteen hundred covers given in honour of Sarah Bernhardt. I attended as one of those who were personally acquainted with her, and who were to be seated at her table in the centre of the great hall. She arrived nearly an hour late. She said how sorry she was to have kept

us waiting, and blamed her coachman for the delay.

At the end of the banquet the president made a long speech. Sarah, in reply, spoke some harmonious sentences in English. From a distance I once more surveyed my divinity. I heard her say, in my mother tongue, that she was happy, and I still loved her.

One day in Paris, very recently, Sarah Bernhardt's business manager was announced. I received him, all the while wondering why my divinity's manager had come to see me. He explained that Madame Sarah Bernhardt wanted to know if I could give her certain hints on the subject of the lighting of her new play, " La Belle au Bois Dormant." I was ill enough to be in bed, but I arose to receive him. I promised him that I would go to see Sarah the next day. The arrangement was inaccurately reported and she understood that I was coming the same day. When she learned that she could count on me only for the next day, she declared that I had fallen ill very suddenly.

This thing wounded me to the quick, for I still loved Sarah. Next day I went to her house and she saw that I was suffering, for I could not utter a word. She took me in her arms and called me her treasure. That was enough. Everything that I had was at her service, and I would have

done anything or given anything to help her. I did remain at rehearsal to familiarise myself with what she needed in the way of illumination.

In her turn she came to my theatre after the performance to see some lighting arrangements that I had installed especially for her play, and with the sole object of pleasing her. She brought some people with her. For her sake I received them all cordially. Among them was her electrician. Each time that I took the trouble to show something to Sarah the electrician would be overheard saying :

" But I can do that. That is easy to copy. Oh, I can do that, too. That's nothing at all."

As always during my performances the spectators were in darkness, and one of my friends; who had seated herself near Sarah to hear the admiring things she would say; was staggered by what she did hear. And in going away Sarah thanked me as she would thank anybody, overwhelming me with pretty speeches.

On the morning of the next day the managing director of the theatre at which I was dancing announced in the newspapers—without having consulted me—that Sarah Bernhardt had come to see Loie Fuller's lighting effects with reference to the new play by Mm. Richepin et Cain, " La Belle au Bois Dormant."

I sent some one to Sarah to ask which lighting apparatus she would like.

And this was her reply.

"My electricians would go on a strike if they thought I was about to associate any one with them. They say they can do whatever I need to have done. Besides, it is only a matter of a gauze curtain and a revolving lamp. A thousand thanks to Loie."

Am I alone to blame for my disillusionment? I had pictured something incomprehensible because Sarah Bernhardt is an inspired artist.

But she is also a woman, and it took me twenty years to find it out. She is a woman, a fact I shall now never be able to forget, but she remains my divinity just the same.

IX

ALEXANDRE DUMAS

ONE evening at the Folies-Bergère two cards were brought to me. On one of them was engraved the name of the Minister of Finance of the island of Haiti; on the other, that of M. Eugène Poulle, also of Haiti.

What business could these two gentlemen have with me? The minister probably wanted me to come and dance at his house.

The gentlemen entered, and I recognised in one of them my Jamaica exile.

But that calls for an explanation.

In 1890 I was engaged by an actor named William Morris for a tour of the West Indies. I was to be star of the company, of which he was the leading man.

One cold winter morning we sailed out of New York harbour, and hardly were we at sea before we fell victims to a fearful storm. For two days and two nights the captain remained on the bridge, and it looked as if we were destined to sink. My mother and I had never undertaken an ocean voyage before. We were terribly sick and, shut up in our cabin, we supposed that at sea things

always went this way. All that we regretted was that we had ever made the trip. Certainly no one would ever induce us to do so again.

When we arrived in southern waters and the waves were still, we appreciated what an extraordinary gale it was that had so shaken us up. Some days later we landed at Kingston, Jamaica.

My mother, Mr. Morris and I took rooms at the same hotel, the Clarendon.

We seemed to be the only guests there. We took our meals in a great hall on the first floor, upon which all the rooms opened.

Yet we were not the only guests, for suddenly a gentleman appeared on the scene.

At first we paid no particular attention to him, but gradually we observed that he seemed to be very much depressed. As it was excessively warm he was always dressed only in his pyjamas. This is a detail that I happen to remember, for Mr. Morris also wore nothing else. The heat was insufferable, but I have always liked heat by reason of the chronic tendency to colds that I have had since my birth.

One day I asked my mother and Mr. Morris to invite the newcomer to our table. I discovered with regret that conversation between us would be impossible because he spoke only French and we only English. By means, however, of pantomime and much good will on both sides, we managed to make him understand our intention.

Our polite intercourse consisted in nods and smiles and bows and in making our hands and arms go this way and that way. As soon, however, as we had become acquainted our relations were at once established on a very comfortable basis.

He went with us to the theatre every time we played, that was three times a week, and we took our meals together. During the three months in which we were in Jamaica, I never took the trouble to find out his name. As a general principle I am always less concerned with my friends' names than with my friends themselves.

After Jamaica we returned to New York and I hardly ever thought of Kingston again.

Two years later, when I was dancing at the Folies-Bergère, an elegant gentleman, accompanied by a friend, asked for an interview. He turned out to be our Jamaica companion and his friend the Minister of Finance of Haiti.

In the meantime he had learned English and was able to tell me that the period at which we had seen him at Kingston was only a few months after the breaking out of a revolution in Haiti. Our friend's father, one of the leading bankers of the island, had been assassinated, and he himself had been obliged to escape in a small boat. He had been rescued at sea and brought to Kingston. All the while he was in Jamaica he had been trying to communicate with his friends, by way of New York, and he had not been able to learn whether

his mother, his brothers, and his sisters were dead or alive.

A short time after our departure he got into communication with his family and discovered that affairs were beginning to improve. He returned home and found everybody safe and sound, except, of course, his unfortunate father.

After having told me this story, which explained his sadness at the time of our first meeting, he asked me :

"How can I be of service to you? You seem to have everything that success can bring, but there is one thing I can do, and one which, I am sure, will give you great pleasure. I can present you to my old friend, Alexandre Dumas," he added, with a pretty smile.

"Really," I said, overcome with joy. "Are you really willing to introduce me to the author of *La Dame aux Camélias?*"

"Yes, indeed," he replied.

That was worth a dozen visits to Jamaica, and I thanked him effusively.

A few days later he came to take me to Marly, where the great writer lived.

During the journey in the railway carriage M. Poulle taught me a French phrase, which I was to say when Dumas extended his hand: "Je suis très contente de serrer votre main" ("I am delighted to grasp your hand"). And of course, when the psychological moment arrived, I phrased

the words all askew. Instead of taking one of his hands I grasped both and emphatically and with stress on each word, I said : " Je suis très contente de votre main serrée" ("I am delighted with your close-fisted hand"). I did not understand his reply, but my friend later on told me that Dumas had replied : "My hand is not close-fisted, but I know what you mean, child. My friend Poulle has related to me his experiences in Jamaica, and I open my heart and my hand in your service."

The gesture he made is the only thing which I remember, for all the rest was Greek to me.

From this time on a great friendship, a great sympathy, subsisted between us, although we were unable to understand each other. Among the important men whom I have met few have exercised upon me a charm such as that of Dumas. At first a little cold, almost stiff in manner, he became, on further acquaintance, exquisitely affable, and of a gallantry suggestive of the fine manners of the old days. At first his words continued obscure to me, but gradually, as I became familiar with the French language, I fell under the irresistible charm of his conversation, with its beautifully logical and rounded phrases, enamelled as it was with sparkling flashes of wit. Dumas had practically two voices, two styles of speech ; one which he employed in ordinary circumstances, as in asking certain questions, or in giving orders ; the other

the one in which he discussed a subject that greatly interested him.

Very tall, with a somewhat dreamy look, he would survey you for a long time, whilst deep in his eyes there gleamed a light of profound and intelligent good will.

His hands, well modelled and large, were very handsome, and he had an almost feminine love of being well groomed.

At breakfast one morning some one asked me if I was very fond of M. Dumas, and I replied in French, which I still understood only imperfectly: "I am very fond of her."

Dumas, convulsed with laughter, said something that I did not get, but which was translated for me thus:

"He says that he has been taken for a whole lot of things, but never before for a woman."

Dumas smiled again and kissed my hand, a circumstance that I have always remembered.

Another time we were at Marly-le-Roi and the Count Primoli took a number of photographs of us and of the garden, in which only a single yellow rose was left.

Dumas picked this flower and gave it to me.

"My dear sir," I said, "it is the last one in the garden. You ought not to give it to me."

M. Poulle, who served as translator, rendered this reply:

Photo *Ellis*

LOIE FULLER AND ALEXANDRE DUMAS

"Oh, very well. Since it is so valuable, what are you going to give me in exchange?"

I replied that a woman could give only one thing for so pretty a thought as that suggested by the rose.

"And that is?" he asked.

I drew his face toward mine and kissed him.

Just at this moment Count Primoli took a snapshot of us, a picture which I have never had the pleasure of owning. I have, however, something better than a picture. I have kept the rose.

Conversing with Dumas I learned from him some things about which I shall think as long as I live. One day, still with M. Poulle's assistance as interpreter, we were speaking of *La Dame aux Camélias* and of the Demi-Monde and the character of the women who compose it. He then said something that I shall never forget:

"When we find one of God's creatures in whom we perceive nothing good, the fault is perhaps in us."

Another day I was driving two pretty Arab ponies that Dumas had bought for his grandchildren. We had reached the bottom of a hillock, and the horses were eager to climb it as quickly as they could.

He said to me:

"Hold them back. They will have to become of age before they will learn that one should not go up hill on the gallop."

When I asked, " What is it that urges them to run this way," he replied :

" They are like men. They want to hurry and get through with whatever annoys them."

Once Alexandre Dumas came to call on me at the Grand Hotel, and from that time on the people about the house looked upon me as a being apart, for it was commonly said that Alexandre Dumas paid as few visits as the Queen of England.

The last time that I saw him was in Paris, Rue Ampère, where he lived in a magnificent *appartement.*

I remember that there was with him a certain M. Singer, an old friend of Dumas', who asked him if he was " indiscreet " and who rose to take leave. Dumas took him by the arm and extending his free hand to me, said :

" Indiscreet ! Certainly not. All my friends ought to know Loie and be fond of her."

When I took leave of him he kissed me on the forehead and gave me a big photograph, enlarged after a portrait of him when he was a child. On the photograph were these words :

" From your little friend Alexandre."

And this is one of my most precious souvenirs.

X

M. AND MME. CAMILLE FLAMMARION

IN America we have a great actress named Modjeska. She is one of the most interesting women I have ever met. She is a Pole, exiled from her own country and married to Count Bozenta. Although she has a title and is very much of an aristocrat by birth, she is possessed of those conceptions of liberty that are generally attributed to the Nihilists. It was, indeed, on that account that her own estates and those of her husband were confiscated, and they themselves driven into exile. That must have occurred about 1880 or a little before.

Then they found their way to free America, established themselves there, and the countess decided to go on the stage.

To her great astonishment, and everybody else's, it was soon evident that the sacred fire burned in her. She became a great actress. In America we are as fond of her as if she were a daughter of our own land.

Shortly after my first appearance at the Folies-Bergère a lady asked to see me. It was the Countess Wolska, likewise a Pole, and a friend of

Modjeska's. She, too, was living in exile with her father, who had dared to write a revolutionary book called *The Polish Jew*.

It was through the kindness of Countess Wolska that I made the acquaintance of M. and Mme. Flammarion. I shall never forget the impression that Camille Flammarion made upon me the first time the countess took me to his house, Rue Cassini. He wore a lounge jacket of white flannel, edged with red lace. He had a veritable forest of hair, which formed as it were a bonnet around his head. This was so remarkable that I could not repress an exclamation. Mme. Flammarion then told me that she frequently had to cut some of the locks, for her husband's hair grew with such vigour that he was tormented by it. Then she showed me a cushion on a divan, and remarked, "There is where I put his hair after cutting it."

To give an accurate idea of Camille Flammarion's style of wearing his hair, you have only to multiply Paderewski's head of hair by twelve.

At the time of my performance of Salome at the Athenée M. and Mme. Flammarion came one evening to my dressing-room, after the performance, along with Alexandre Dumas. As there were many other people there I did not notice at first that the two men did not speak to each other. Finally I became aware of it and I asked, in great surprise, "Is it possible that the two most distinguished

personalities in Paris are not acquainted with each other."

"It is not so remarkable," replied Dumas, "for, you see, Flammarion dwells in space, and I am just a cumberer of the earth."

"Yes," said Flammarion, "but a little star come out of the West has brought us together."

Dumas began to laugh and said, "That is the absolute truth."

I joined the conversation and declared that the little American speck of star-dust was very proud of having the honour and pleasure of bringing together two such bright stars of France.

Few people understand that Flammarion is not content with being an eminent astronomer. He counts among his assets some discoveries of the greatest interest, most of which have no relation to astronomy.

One of them in particular interested me, as was natural.

Flammarion wanted to know whether colour has a certain influence on organisms. How greatly such studies interest me is easily appreciated, since I am rabid on the subject of colour.

He began his investigations by observing plants. He took half-a-dozen geraniums, all of the same size, and put each of them in a little conservatory with glass of different colours. One of the conservatories had panes of white glass, and one geranium finally he planted in the open air.

The result was surprising, as I can testify from having seen them.

One of the plants, a very fragile one, had expanded itself entirely at great height. Another was very small but thick set. Still another had no leaves. A fourth had only a small stem, some leaves and no branches. Each plant was different according to the colour that had shaded it, and even the one he had planted under the white glass was not quite normal. Not one was green, a fact which proves not only that colour but that glass has an action upon the plant. The only pretty plant was the one that had been planted in the open air. This one was normal.

Continuing his experiments on the human body, Flammarion had panes of different colours set in the windows of his observatory. Each person who was sufficiently interested in his experiences not to be afraid of the annoyances of sitting still in light of a green colour for an hour or two, was able to feel the varied influences that colour conditions induce in the system. It is a fact, for example, that yellow causes enervation and that mauve engenders sleep.

I asked M. Flammarion if he thought that the colours with which we are surrounded have an effect on our characters, and he replied :

" There is no doubt, is there, that each of us is better satisfied with his appearance in one colour

Photo *Ellis*

M. AND MME. CAMILLE FLAMMARION, TAKEN AT JUVISY

than in another ? That is proved by experience, for everybody will tell you : ' I love this colour,' or 'I don't care for that one.' Isn't it also said that such and such a colour ' suits ' or ' doesn't suit ' on such and such a person ? All that appears to prove that colour must exert some sort of influence, moral or physical, or perhaps both simultaneously."

It is only when you become intimately acquainted with Flammarion that you appreciate what a deep thinker he is.

In all his work he is ably seconded by his wife. She, too, is a deep thinker and a woman of remarkable initiative. She is one of the charter members of the Association for Disarmament, and she gives a great deal of time to other good works ; yet these activities do not prevent her from being one of the simplest of women and most accomplished of housekeepers.

It may be interesting to describe briefly Flammarion's country house. They live in a château at Juvisy, in the very place where Louis XIII. first conceived the project of building a royal palace. The terracing was finished and the park laid out when there occurred a slight earthquake, and Louis XIII. renounced his plan, turning his attention to Versailles. But from that day to this no other earthquake has ever occurred there. The remarkable situation of Juvisy merits a visit from any one who loves natural beauty. The

panorama that is unfolded from it is one of the loveliest in France.

The château, which antedates Louis' project, is still in existence. There it was that Napoleon stayed for a while when on his way to Fontainebleau. He held a council in the shade of a venerable tree, which, from its superb height, dominates the grassy hill in front of the château. Under the tree were installed the table and the stone bench, which are still shown, in order that the Emperor might hold a council of those who were faithful to him, and be free from the prying eyes of inquisitive persons. Behind the château is the famous lane, a great avenue completely covered by the branches of two rows of trees, where according to tradition Napoleon passed some hours in congenial company.

The château once became the property of an amateur astronomer. He had an observatory built on it, and on his death he bequeathed this wonderful estate to a man whom he had never met. This man was Camille Flammarion.

I once attended a varnishing day with Camille Flammarion. I wanted to do him the honour of going dressed in my best, and so I bought for the occasion a costume which, I think, must have been very pretty. To go with the gown I selected a hat with long ribbons hanging behind.

M. Flammarion appeared in a smoking jacket of brown velvet and a soft hat.

Everybody in this gathering of specialists and artists was acquainted with him. There was whispering to the effect that Loie Fuller was with him, and soon we had around us more people than there were in front of any single picture. I fancied that we looked very swell, but I was told later on that we were followed principally because of our reputations, because never a woman was arrayed as I was that day, and because M. Flammarion's garb was not exactly conventional.

Our success was such that one enthusiast even cut the ribbons from my hat, probably to keep them as a souvenir of a spectacle that he thought memorable.

In other circumstances I made a display that was not less memorable though confined to a smaller number of spectators.

One evening I came home at eight o'clock and found my house full of people. I had quite forgotten that I was giving a dinner party of about forty covers. My chef had asked me, that very morning, if I would be good enough to arrange for hiring some chairs and tables. He would take care of the dinner without my being bothered with it further. But, as I did not see a spare minute ahead of me that day, I requested him to see to the accessories as well as to the menu itself, a thing that he was very glad to do. The chairs, the tables and the dishes arrived. He had made no terms regarding the accommodation,

and had supposed that I would be there to receive what was necessary and pay the bill. I had not returned. They waited until seven o'clock and the chef decided as my representative to pay the bill himself. He was asked to give three hundred francs. The price seemed to him exorbitant, and he did not dare to pay the bill without my consent. He was, however, so perplexed, so afraid of seeing my dinner party a dead failure for want of chairs for the guests to sit on, that he concluded he would advance the money. Then he discovered that he had not enough with him, and the men from the caterer's went back with their chairs, tables, etc.

The chef was at his wit's end. He did not know what to do until a magnificent inspiration came to him. He went and told his troubles to all my neighbours, who hastened to offer him chairs, tables, dishes, glasses of every style and make. I made my entrance just as my neighbours were sending in their goods, and while the invited guests were beginning to arrive. Everybody turned to and helped lay the tables, and I believe that I have never been present at a pleasanter affair.

Some of the tables were high, others low. The chairs added to the appearance of a general mix-up. Table cloths were sadly lacking, as were knives and glasses. My chef did wonders in making us forget that the banquet arrangements were not

absolutely correct. The oddest thing of all was that that evening, having met some friends, I had come within an ace of not being present at my own dinner. In short, I had forgotten all about it.

This dinner, at which there were among the guests Rodin and Fritz Thaulow, was given in honour of M. and Mme. Flammarion.

XI

A VISIT AT RODIN'S

MOST people are not acquainted with the temple of art at Meudon, which the great sculptor, Auguste Rodin, has built near his house. The temple is situated at the top of a little hill, and the outlook embraces one of the most beautiful prospects around Paris.

The view to be obtained from Flammarion's observatory at Juvisy made a great impression on me. The view, however, which one has from Meudon, though it is less sublime, stirs one more perceptibly. Juvisy simply impresses through its atmosphere of grandeur, its calm, its suggestion of the past.

At Meudon, on the other hand, everything seems to aspire towards a new life, towards new times. One feels oneself leap for joy, like the dog that precedes one in quest of the master of the house. This is the impression that you get when you reach the gate, after having walked along an avenue that is not very wide and is lined with newly-planted trees. You arrive at a fence, a very ordinary fence, that incloses nothing and

which is there, I fancy, only to prevent wandering animals from getting in and those of the household from getting out. The moment you draw the latch, which causes a bell to resound in the distance, a dog rushes wildly from the house and gives you a most joyous welcome. Then Rodin appears in his turn. In his rather unwieldy body and his features, which are a trifle heavy, great kindliness and sweetness of disposition are evident. He walks slowly. His gestures are kindly, his voice kindly. Everything about him breathes kindliness.

He receives you by extending both hands, very simply and with a friendly smile. Sometimes a movement of the eyes and some words to which you pay no great attention may hint that the moment has perhaps not been well chosen for a visit, but his instinctive good nature gets the upper hand. He places himself by your side and shows you the path that leads to the top of the hill.

The panorama seems so extraordinary that you pause to take it in.

The temple stands at your right, the landscape spreads itself before your feet, and if you turn your glance to the left you note a forest of ancient trees.

Then we look at Rodin. He breathes deeply in silence while he admires the landscape. He surveys everything with such an air of tender

interest that you realise he is passionately attached to this spot.

His temple, too, is wonderful, so wonderful that this accessory easily becomes the central feature in the landscape.

Rodin opens the temple door gently and then in a friendly way bids you enter. There truly silence is golden. Words are powerless. We know that we are unable to express in words some of our sensations, unless as a preliminary we have experienced them profoundly.

One ought to see Rodin at Meudon to appreciate him at his true value. One should see the man, his surroundings and his work, to understand the breadth and depth of his personality.

The visit of which I am writing occurred in April, 1902. I had taken with me a well-known scholar—he has since died under tragic circumstances, having been run over by a carriage—and his wife, who was not less scholarly than he. They had never been at Meudon before, and they were not acquainted with Rodin. They were just as simple as the master himself. When I introduced them not a word passed. They grasped each others' hands, and looked at each other. Then, when we left, they grasped each others' hands again, and held them for some little time. That was all.

Yet, no, that was not all. In the looks they exchanged there was a world of intelligence,

appreciation, comprehension. Rodin, with his peculiar figure, his long beard, and his eyes that gaze right through you, was matched, as regards simplicity, by this husband and wife. The former, brown, tall, and thin, the latter, slight and blonde, had alike a single aim, that of not making themselves conspicuous.

In the temple there was silence—a silence profound, admiring, almost religious, the effect of which I should like to be able to reproduce.

Rodin led us to a work of which he was particularly fond. Motionless and mute, the two visitors looked at the masterpiece before them. Rodin in his turn looked at them, fondling the marble and awaiting from them some sign of approbation or of comprehension, a word, a movement of the head or the hand.

Thus, from work to work, from room to room—for there are three studios in Rodin's temple—we made our way, slowly, silently, our artistic pilgrimage taking on something of the significance of a communion.

In the two hours we passed in the temple hardly ten words were spoken.

When the inspection of the three studios was finished, a gentleman and a lady walking across the garden came towards us, and Rodin, in a very simple way, mentioned the names of M. and Mme. Carrière, the great painter and his wife. M. Carrière and his wife are also as free from ostenta-

tion as Rodin himself and the pair of scholars who accompanied me.

We left. In the carriage that took us back I asked my friends if they could describe their impressions, their sensations. They replied in the negative. Yet on their faces there were evidences of great happiness, and I knew they had appreciated and understood Rodin. These two people are known throughout the world. They are the greatest chemists of our day, peers of the celebrated Berthelot. Since then the husband, like Berthelot, has gone to his last rest and the wife carries on their common activities. I would give a good deal to be able adequately to express the admiration I feel for her, but out of deference to her own desire for simplicity and self-effacement I must not even mention her name.

So far as I myself am concerned, I may say that Rodin is, like the great master, Anatole France, one of the men in France who have impressed me most strongly.

Anatole France has been so kind as to say some things about me at the beginning of this volume—words exquisitely expressed, and of which, although far too laudatory, I am naturally very proud.

I am not less proud of Rodin's good opinion. This opinion I have noted in a letter the great sculptor wrote to one of my friends. Not for reasons of vanity do I reproduce it here, but because

of the simplicity of its form and in grateful remembrance of the great pleasure it caused me.

"Mme. Loie Fuller, whom I have admired for a number of years, is, to my mind, a woman of genius, with all the resources of talent," so wrote the master from Meudon on January 19, 1908.

"All the cities in which she has appeared, including Paris, are under obligations to her for the purest emotions. She has reawakened the spirit of antiquity, showing the Tanagra figurines in action. Her talent will always be imitated, from now on, and her creation will be reattempted over and over again, for she has re-created effects and light and background, all things which will be studied continually, and whose initial value I have understood.

"She has even been able, by her brilliant reproduction, to make us understand the Far East.

"I fall far below what I ought to say about this great personality; my language is inept for that, but my artistic heart is grateful to her."

Less grateful, certainly, than I am to the man who wrote these lines. I am, nevertheless, happy to have been able to bring together on the same page the names of two masters of form who have influenced me profoundly and whom I revere affectionately.

XII

M. GROULT'S COLLECTION

ONE beautiful summer afternoon I was driven to a house in the Boulevard Inkermann at Neuilly. From afar off I heard the sound of hunting-horns, and I wondered in what part of Neuilly it was possible to follow the hounds. That was certainly a novelty.

The carriage stopped.

We were at the house of the charming Rachel Boyer, of the Comédie-Française, who had invited me to a matinee. Before reaching the house I crossed a great garden, still pursued by the sound of hunting-horns that were clearly coming nearer. While I was wondering again where the huntsmen could be riding I reached the house.

The mistress of the establishment received me with the greatest cordiality. Rachel Boyer is a charming soul. She beams like a ray of sunlight.

She saw me pricking up my ears with curiosity, for I continued to wonder where the huntsmen were hidden.

She smiled over and over again and with an air of mystery.

I could not restrain myself from asking her where the sounds I had heard came from, and whether a hunting party was in progress in her garden.

She began to laugh openly, and said :

" There isn't any hunting. These buglers I engage to bid my guests a harmonious and cordial welcome."

" But I don't see them anywhere. It is really very pretty."

" From the moment that I have given you pleasure I have succeeded."

On that day I made the acquaintance of two persons who were then prominent in the first rank of Parisian notabilities. One was a man of the world, refined, delicate, spiritual, gallant, and possessed of the rare and subtle talent of talking on any subject without in any way involving himself in difficulties. This was M. Cheramy. The other was an older person, with expressive features under thick grey hair. His manner was crabbed and gruff. He expressed himself in phrases that were jerky and brief, but full of natural wit. It was evident that he took a real pleasure in talking to us.

We three, M. Cheramy, he and I, were discussing artistic questions when, in a pause of our conversation, we perceived that we were surrounded by a considerable audience. The effect was magical. Two of us became silent, but M. Cheramy was

equal to the situation and, with perfect calmness, put everyone at ease.

We were then in the salon. The grey-haired gentleman caught my attention as well as that of Rachel Boyer, who was talking in the midst of a group some distance away. He made us understand with signs that he wished to speak with us, apart from the others. We slipped away to find out what he wanted.

I expected—it goes without saying, considering his mysterious manner—something extraordinary, and, from the point of view of our companion, I was not far wrong.

"Perhaps!" he said abruptly, "you would like to look at my collection."

While he pronounced these two words, "my collection," an air of self-respect shone on his face. Since then I have recalled this experience and have understood it. But I was not at all affected by it then, and I kept wondering what kind of queer character this was. He seemed to me a little out of his mind. I answered him, therefore, without disturbing myself:

"Thank you, sir. I have just seen the Louvre; and I think that is a very pretty col—"

Rachel Boyer broke into my sentence smiling, but with a look as if she were somewhat scandalised. Then she assured the old man that we both were appreciative in the highest degree of the marked favour that he had shown us.

Thereupon we made an appointment, and the little old man left us.

"Why does he want me to see his collection," I asked Rachel Boyer.

"Why?" she replied. "For no other reason undoubtedly than that he particularly admires you. For, you see, his collection is the most complete of its kind, and in his eyes sacred. I cannot tell you how surprised I was to hear him invite you. Only very rarely, as a matter of fact, does he permit anyone to look at his masterpieces."

"Really! But who is this gentleman? What does he do?"

"What! You don't know him! Yet I introduced him to you."

"You did. But I failed to catch his name."

Rachel Boyer's voice bore a tone of deep respect as she said:

"Why, that is M. Groult!"

For my part I was conscious of no new respect, for to tell the truth, I was no further along than before. I did not remember ever having heard his name, and I said so, in all honesty, to Rachel Boyer, who was greatly astonished.

It looked as if I had committed a sacrilege.

She then informed me, that M. Groult was a man who had made an immense fortune in business, a fact that did not leave me gasping with admiration. She added that he was spending a great part of his fortune upon pictures.

"M. Groult," said Rachel Boyer ecstatically, "has brought together the most beautiful treasures of art that a man has ever possessed."

That was very interesting, unquestionably, but I kept thinking, quietly, that such a hobby could hardly leave leisure to a man, however rich, to do the good he might do with his money. I believe I should have been much more impressed if I had heard her speak of some of his philanthropies.

I finally concluded, however, that out of regard to my hostess, I should have to believe the collection to be so colossal that everything else was insignificant in comparison with it.

Some days later Rachel Boyer took me, with another of her friends, to see M. Groult's famous collection. The collection was far from being as interesting to me as the collector, who, by reason of his personality, appeared to me to be much more curious than his works of art.

He led us at first in front of a great show case and, with refined and reverential gestures, disclosed to us the most marvellous imaginable collection of butterflies. There were 18,000 of them. He pointed out four in particular, and told us that he had bought the whole lot for the sake of those, and he added, to my great confusion, that that was because they looked like me.

"These colours are you," he said almost crudely.

"Just see what richness. That rose, that blue, that's you. It is really you."

While he was saying that, he kept looking at me just as if he were afraid I might suspect his sincerity and that I should mistake his statements of fact for compliments.

In simple language he expressed the most intense artistic convictions. One felt them to be innate; they came from the depths of his being, and they transformed him to such a degree that I saw him at the moment a transfigured soul.

He took us to another part of the hall, and showed us several panels of something that looked to me like coloured marble, highly polished.

"Look," he said softly. "There you are again. I bought these panels, for they again are you."

And turning them toward the light, he caused all the colours of the rainbow to radiate from their surfaces.

"Is it marble?" I asked, in order to have something to say. I felt worried by all this admiration.

He looked at me almost scornfully, and replied:

"Marble, marble, no indeed. These are slabs of petrified wood."

I supposed that we had seen M. Groult's collection, for there were enough rooms in it to fit out a little museum. I discovered, however, that we had seen nothing at all. M. Groult opened a door and bade us enter a large gallery where sixty-two Turners awaited our attention.

He raised his forefinger to impose upon us a silence that no one had any intention of breaking. Then he took us from one picture to another, indicating what in his view constituted the charms of each canvas. Finally he came near to me and then, embracing the hall with one big sweep of the hand, said :

" These are your colours. Turner certainly foresaw you when he created them."

Next he showed his collection of engravings, etchings, and prints, representing the most glorious dancers. All these, he said, were to reveal to me what I based my art upon when I danced. He pointed to a celebrated frieze from Pompeii and then, looking at me fixedly, said :

" Look at that. Those are your motions."

He drew back to present the pose, and he reproduced one of the motions very seriously in spite of his rheumatism, which hardly allowed him to stand on his legs.

" Now," said he, " I am going to show you the work of art I am most attached to."

And, in a large glass-covered recess, he showed me the thing which gave him special pleasure. It was a basin in which a fountain was playing, while around it numerous turtle doves were fluttering.

" It is these cooing birds that make you happy," I cried. " It is too bad that everybody cannot observe this beautiful and natural

picture, side by side with your wonderful collections."

"Allow my collections to be seen?" he cried. "Never. No one would understand them."

I realised then to what an extent he cherished each one of these objects, which ought, according to his view, to be regarded only with devotion. In each visitor he saw only an inquisitive person and nothing more. From his standpoint the creators of these masterpieces had entrusted them to him in order that he might care for them and protect them from profane inspection.

"I should like," he said in his mystic way, "to burn them every one the night before my death if I could do it. It is discouraging, is it not, to abandon them to idle curiosity and indifference?"

M. Groult gave me a new perception of the nature of art and its value. He was acquainted with all the circumstances that had attended the birth of his masterpieces. He spoke of them both as a man of sensibility and as an art critic.

As he bade us adieu he asked me to come again.

One day the curator of the museum at Bucharest came to Paris, and a common friend brought him to my house. Among other things he spoke to me of M. Groult's famous collection, which no one was permitted to see. I promised him to do my best to secure an invitation for him and I accordingly wrote to M. Groult.

He replied at once, asking me to bring the museum curator to see him.

When the curator expressed his gratitude to M. Groult, he replied :

" It is she whom you ought to thank. I do not care to have strangers here, but she is part of my collection. You will find her here everywhere. Just look."

He then told the story of the butterflies, adding :

" This is nature as no one can paint it exactly. She has succeeded in it. She is a painter of nature."

Then he showed the petrified wood and spoke of it, with some difference of expression, much as he had spoken the first time in my presence. Finally he begged his visitor to call upon him every time he came to Paris. As we went away I was obliged to promise to visit him again soon. But, when I had leisure to do so, M. Groult was already too ill to receive me and I never saw him again.

I am glad to have known him, for he was an extraordinary man.

XIII

MY DANCES AND THE CHILDREN

CHILDREN brought up on fairy tales and stories of adventure, have an imagination that is easily kindled by suggestions of the supernatural. From the unearthly appearance of my dances, caused by the light and the mingling of colours, they ought particularly to appeal to the young, making them believe that the being flitting about there before them among the shadows and flashes of light belongs to the unreal world which holds sway in their lives.

You can hardly conceive of the genuine enthusiasm I have aroused, or, to express it more exactly, since my personality counts for nothing, of the enthusiasm my dancing has aroused amongst children. I have only to go back in memory to see enraptured groups of children, caught under the spell of my art. I even have literary testimony to this effect, since I find among my papers this note, signed by one of my friends, M. Auguste Masure :

" Dear Miss Loie : We have formed a plan of taking the children to see you at a matinee next week. Our third, the youngest, is a little boy

whom you have never seen. He looks at all your lithographs and always asks to have them explained. He is only three and a half, but his brother and sister have so filled his head with Loie Fuller that when he sees you it will be worth while observing what he has to say."

If I cite this circumstance it is, let me repeat, because written testimony is involved—testimony that proves clearly the profound impression my dances make on children. Here was a little one, three and a half years old, who was possessed of a desire to see me simply through having heard my praises sung—in what language one may conjecture—by two other children.

Here is a story that if not more convincing is more characteristic.

One afternoon the daughter of an architect, very well known in Paris, had brought her little girl to a matinee in the course of which I came on. The child, I was told, seemed fascinated and dazed. She did not say a word, did not make the slightest noise, hardly dared to stir. I seemed to have hypnotised her.

At the end of the performance the young mother, whom I knew very well, said to the little girl :

" We are going to see Loie Fuller in her dressing-room."

A light was kindled in the child's eyes, and she followed her mother, clutching at her hand nervously. If the little girl was so visibly affected it

Photo. *Muller*

THE DANCE OF FLOWERS

was not at the idea of seeing me, but of being in the presence of an extraordinary creature, a kind of fairy. The conclusion of this incident proves that.

The mother and the child found their way to my dressing-room.

An attendant opened the door. She asked them to be seated until I should be able to receive them. The keenest emotion was still imprinted on the child's little features. She must have supposed that she was going to be taken into some celestial place. She looked round with restless eyes, surveying the bare walls, the uncarpeted floor, and seemed to be waiting to see the ceiling or the flooring open suddenly and permit an entrance into Loie Fuller's kingdom.

Suddenly a folding screen was drawn and a young woman came forward, who looked tired and in whose appearance there was nothing supernatural. With arms outstretched she advanced smiling.

The child's eyes opened wider and wider. The nearer I came the further she shrank away.

Quite astonished her mother said :

" What is the matter, dear ? This is Miss Fuller, who danced for you so prettily a few minutes ago. You know you begged me so hard to bring you to see her."

As if touched by a magic wand the child's expression changed.

" No, no. That isn't her. I don't want to see

her. This one here is a fat lady, and it was a fairy I saw dancing."

If there is one thing in the world of which I am incapable, it is consciously to cause anyone pain, and, with my love of children, I should never have been happy again if I had caused my little visitor to be disillusioned. I endeavoured therefore to be equal to the situation, and I said to the child :

" Yes, my dear, you are right. I am not Loie Fuller. The fairy has sent me to tell you how much she loves you and how sorry she is not to be able to take you to her kingdom. She cannot come. She really cannot. She told me just to take you in my arms and give you a kiss, a good kiss for her."

At these words the little one threw herself into my arms.

" Oh," she said, " kiss the pretty fairy for me and ask her if I can come again to see her dance."

There were tears in my eyes as I replied :

" Come as often as you like, my dear little girl. I hear the fairy whispering in my ear that she would like to dance for you all the time, all the time."

At Bucharest Princess Marie of Roumania had sent all her children to see me at a matinee. The royal box was occupied by a chattering and noisy little regiment of princes, princesses and their friends. When my turn came to go on the lights were turned down and, in the silence that ensued,

Photo Lauffer

THE DANCE OF THE BUTTERFLY

one could hear distinctly, coming from the royal box, the words :

" Hush. Keep quiet."

Then, when I appeared :

" Oh, it is a butterfly ! '

All this was said in a very high voice. Then I recognised the voice of the oldest of the princesses, the one who is so remarkably like her grandmother, the late Queen Victoria. In a tone of the utmost contempt she declared : " You don't know what you are talking about. It's an angel."

At each change in the dance the oldest of the little princesses made some further remark, explaining everything from her point of view, as if her utterances were authoritative.

Some days later I went to the palace. Princess Marie sent some one to look up the children. They came in one after the other, as timidly as so many middle-class children might in the presence of a stranger.

When the princess explained to them that I was the lady whom they had seen dance at the theatre, the oldest of them did not say a word, but, despite her careful training, her face said plainly enough :

" You don't fool me. This woman is telling fibs."

I should have had to dance for them at the palace to convince them that it was really I whom they had taken for an angel. This part of the

affair, though already arranged for, was given up at my request. I wanted to avoid disillusioning these children.

Accordingly, when I danced at the palace the little princes and princesses were not present at the performance. They came back, on the other hand, to the theatre, where they were confirmed in their conviction that the lady whom they had seen with their mother and who tried to pass herself off as Loie Fuller was an impostor. The eldest of the little princesses called out so loudly as to be heard all over the house :

" This time it is really Loie Fuller."

She pronounced her words with a distinctness that proved clearly that the subject had been discussed at length among the children, and that this affirmation was the result of mature deliberation.

M. Roger Marx has two sons, who, when they saw me for the first time, were respectively four and six years old. The elder took a notion to dance " like Loie Fuller," using a table cloth for drapery. I gave him a robe modelled after one of mine and, before we knew it, the child was evolving new dances.

The way he expressed joy, grief, ecstasy and despair was admirable. His memory of me, or rather his memory of my dances, remained so vivid and epitomised so precisely the conception he had of beauty and of art that he became a " poet."

Here are some verses which, two years later, I

inspired in this little boy, and which his mother, Mme. Roger Marx, turned over to me :

Pale vision
A l'horizon
En ce lieu sombre
Fugitive ombre. . .

Devant mes yeux vague
Une forme vague,
Suis-je fascine?
Une blanche vague.

En volutes d'argent
Sur l'océan immense,
Elle court follement,
Elle s'enfuit et danse

Protée reste! Ne fuis pas!
Sur la fleur qu'on ne voit pas
Palpite, hésite, et se pose
Un papillon vert et rose:

Il voltige sans aucun bruit
Etend ses ailes polychromes
Et maintenant c'est un arum
Au lieu d'un papillon de nuit . . . .

The little fellow ended by making wax figurines, representing " Loie Fuller," works of art that I treasure with great care.

Another curious incident is that of the daughter of Madame Nevada, the great American singer. The child always called me " ma Loie " and, after her first visit to the theatre to which she had gone to see me dance, she tried to imitate me. She was so remarkable that I had a little robe made for her. Her father, Dr. Palmer, arranged at his house

a magic lantern with variable lights. The little girl danced and invented strange and remarkable forms, which she called "the birth of spring," "summer," "autumn," and "winter." She was able to make use of various expressions and to combine motions of the arms and the body harmoniously.

The little dear was so successful among the few intimate friends who saw her, that Mme. Nevada was obliged to give some recitals in her luxurious *appartement* in the Avenue Wagram, so that her friends might applaud the delightful child. At one of these recitals some Catholic priests were present, and when they expressed themselves as delighted by the child's charm of manner, she said to them quickly:

"Do you like these dances? Then you ought to go and see 'My Loie.' She dances at the Folies-Bergère!"

Here is quite a different impression I once made.

Long before my debut as a dancer, I was a little *ingenue*, and was playing the burlesque role of Jack Sheppard in the play of that name, supporting the distinguished comedian Nat Goodwin. The Editor of one of the principal papers in New York one evening brought his wife and daughter to the theatre to see me in my popular part.

The Editor's daughter became very anxious to make my acquaintance. Her father looked me up and wrote to ask me if he might bring his

daughter, a young person six years old, to call upon me.

I had succeeded so perfectly in taking a boy's part that the little girl could not believe but that I really was one, and when she had been presented to me, she asked :

" Well, why does Jack wear girl's clothes ? "

That was another time when I did not undeceive a little admirer. To-day she is a fine young woman who has always been a faithful friend of mine.

When I was sixteen years old I made the acquaintance of a young widow who had two sons, seven and nine years old respectively. The elder fell in love with me. In spite of everything they could do to take his mind off it he became worse and worse. He fell behind in his studies and he broke away completely from his mother's control. Things came to such a point that it was necessary to give the child a change of scene. The widow accordingly left for England with her boy. After a little time she supposed that he had ceased to think of me.

Nine years passed. In the meantime I had become a dancer and in London I happened upon the widow and her sons. Forgetting all about my little admirer's former passion—he was now a big boy of eighteen—I engaged him as my secretary.

Some days after he said to me quietly :

" Do you remember, Miss Fuller, that when I

was nine years old I told you that at eighteen I should ask you to be my wife ? "

" Yes, I remember it."

" Well, I am eighteen years old now and I have not changed my mind. Will you marry me ? "

Very lately my admirer has repeated his declaration that he will never marry. He is thirty years old to-day, and who knows, perhaps the man's heart has remained the same as the heart of the boy of nine.

XIV

PRINCESS MARIE

IT was the evening of my first appearance at Bucharest.

Some one came to tell me that the Prince and Princess Royal were in the royal box.

After the performance they sent an officer to tell me how greatly my dances had interested them. They promised to come again and, as they wanted their children to see me, they asked if I would not give a matinee.

I was in the act of putting on my clothes.

It was impossible for me to receive the officer, who accordingly gave the message from their royal highnesses to my maid.

Next day I wrote to Princess Marie to thank her, and proposed to give a performance at the palace, if that seemed to her desirable.

The reply came without delay. The princess sent for me.

That is called a "court order," but it came in the guise of a charming letter, which said that the princess would be very glad to see me if I was not incommoded by the hour which she set.

When I arrived at the palace I was taken up a

great staircase and then introduced to a little salon, which was like every other little salon in every other palace. I thought how disagreeable it must be to live in an atmosphere that has been created by a hundred other people before your time, and in which nothing really belongs to you. I was engaged in thinking this when an official opened the door and asked me to follow him.

What a change!

In a most delightfully arranged room I saw a young woman, tall, slender, and extremely pretty. The surroundings, the furniture, the style, all were so personal to the young woman that the palace dropped out.

I actually forgot where I was, and I fancied myself in the presence of a legendary princess in a fairy-tale-chamber.

Accordingly the first words I uttered, as I took the hand which the pretty princess extended toward me, were:

"Oh, how exquisite this is! It is not at all like a royal palace—any more than you seem like a princess receiving a stranger!"

She began to smile and after we were seated she said:

"Do you think that a princess should always be cold and ceremonious when she receives a stranger? Well, so far as I am concerned, you are not a stranger at all. After having seen you in your beautiful dances it seems to me that I am

well acquainted, and I am very glad indeed that you have come to see me."

Then she asked if I could secure all my effects in an ordinary hall. She was thinking of the performance which I was to give at the palace.

I told her that this would be quite possible. Then, and almost without knowing what I was saying, I murmured: "Heavens, how pretty it is! What a wonderful view you get from these windows!"

"Yes. It is chiefly on account of this view that I wanted to live here. The landscape which we overlook reminds me of England; for, as you see, standing by these windows when I look out I can fancy myself once again in the dear country in which I was born."

"Then you still love England?"

"Have you ever met an Englishman yet who loved another country better than his own?"

"Don't you love Roumania?"

"It is impossible to live here without loving both the people and the country."

She then showed me a big picture. It was her own portrait in the national Roumanian costume. But on account of her blonde hair and her fair complexion the contrast with the other Roumanians whom I had seen was very striking. It seemed that the picture was tinged with sadness, and I wondered whether the princess would not some day regret her enforced exile. To me she

gave the impression of a lily, planted in a field of wild poppies.

When we returned to our seats I looked at the princess. I admired her excellent carriage, her friendly smile.

She showed me a large portfolio in which she had painted some flowers. One of these pictures represented some Chinese plants drooping in a melancholy fashion. I could not help looking at the princess as she turned the page.

"I painted them one day when I was feeling very blue," she said. "We all have such days, do we not?"

"Yes, your Highness, but you ought not to have them."

"Well, let me tell you, there is no one alive who has no cause for sadness. I am certainly not exempt."

Then, changing the topic of conversation, she said:

"See these chairs. Do you like them?"

The chairs were exquisite. The princess had painted them. The upholstery and the woodwork were both adorned with flowers she had painted. By the fireplace the princess had arranged a little corner with divans and low seats covered with Liberty silk. The room was huge, with windows along one side. This row of windows was parallel to a sort of colonnade, which had been there before the room was transformed by

the princess, and made a kind of corridor. One might have wished it removed to enlarge the room, but the princess had it now, and, from a decorative standpoint, she had made the best of it. The ceiling was inlaid with golden panels. I am not sufficiently versed in architecture to state to what style this room would be said to belong; but nothing that I had ever seen before was just like it. It seemed to me to have originated in the brain of some one who had quite new ideas, for the arrangement was absolutely original. The room was panelled in blue faïence and heavy oriental tapestries.

I write this from memory, five years after my visit, but I am certain that I have not forgotten a single detail.

Then we spoke of dancing.

"Have you ever danced before my grandmother?" asked the princess.

"No, never. At Nice once I was to have the honour of appearing before Her Majesty Queen Victoria, when my manager suddenly obliged me to leave for America. I have always regretted it, for a second opportunity never offered itself."

The princess then asked me if the King and Queen of England had seen me dance.

"No, but I suppose they think they have seen me, for in my little theatre at the Exposition of 1900, on the days when I was engaged elsewhere, I was sometimes obliged to be represented by an

understudy. During one of my absences the King and Queen of England, who were then the Prince and Princess of Wales, took a box to see the little Japanese tragedienne who was playing at my theatre. That day an understudy was dancing for me, but the King and Queen probably supposed it was I whom they had seen."

"Oh, well, you will have to dance for them some day."

Then she asked me if I had danced before her cousin, the Emperor of Germany.

"No," I answered regretfully.

"Very well, let me know when you will be in Berlin and I will try to have him go and see you. He loves artistic things, and he is an accomplished artist himself."

Later I did dance before the Queen of England, but I was far from suspecting under what circumstances it would come to pass.

I asked Princess Marie if she had ever been interested in the dances of the Hindus and the Egyptians, their funeral dances, sacred dances, dances of death and the rest. She, in her turn, questioned me as to the methods by which I thought it would be possible to reconstruct these dances.

"There are very few documents treating of the subject, but it seems to me that it should be easy, if one put oneself into the state of mind that prompted the dances in times past, to reproduce

them to-day with similar action and movement. If the custom still existed of dancing at funerals, a little reflection will show that the dances would have to suggest and express sadness, despair, grief, agony, resignation and hope. All this can be expressed by motions and hence by the dance. The only question is whether the dancer should express the grief she feels at the loss of a loved one, or if she should reveal to the people who are in mourning resignation and the hope of a future life. In other words, pantomime should be a sort of silent music, a harmony of motions adapted to the situation, for there is harmony in everything—harmony of sounds (which is music), harmony of colours, harmony of ideas, harmony of motions."

We talked for a long time about these dances, and the princess asked me :

" Shall we be able to appreciate pictures of this kind when you come to dance at the palace ? "

I replied that I was thinking of dances of this sort when I wrote to her, for these reconstructions would naturally interest her beyond what she had seen at the theatre.

Then the princess asked me a thousand other questions and we were so absorbed in our conversation that her luncheon waited more than an hour for her.

The evening when I danced at the palace I supposed that the princess would be alone, for we had agreed, as I have already explained, that

the children were not to be present at my performance. They were not present, as a matter of fact, but the princess had invited the King and the Queen and all their retinue, limiting the invitations strictly to habitués of the court.

When I saw the crowd of guests, I could not help wondering how they were going to seat everybody.

We had chosen the dining-hall in which to place an improvised stage, and I had brought two electricians in order to be prepared, if the princess wished me to do so, to present one or two of my radiant dances.

The court pianist, in the meantime, had instructed me in some of Carmen Sylva's songs. The evening entertainment began with expressions in pantomime and dance of several of those songs.

It was nine o'clock. At one o'clock in the morning I was still dancing; but I felt myself so utterly exhausted that I had to stop. The princess observed my fatigue and came to me.

"What selfishness on our part not to have thought earlier of how tired you must be!"

"Oh, I am so pleased that it seems to me I could go on for ever, if I could only get a minute's rest. You are the one who must be tired."

Supper had been waiting for a long time, and the performance ended then and there.

The King asked, I remember, if I could dance "Home, Sweet Home." I had never tried it, but it did not seem to me difficult—with the accom-

DANCE TO GOUNOD'S "AVE MARIA"

paniment of the exquisite melody—to express the words, "There's no place like home."

I had danced that evening Gounod's *Ave Maria* some bacchanal dances, some other dances, based upon slow movements of Mendelssohn's concertos for the dances of death, and on Chopin's *Marche, Funèbre* for the funeral dances. My excellent orchestra leader, Edmond Bosanquet, had, furthermore, composed some perfect music for dances of joy and of grief. In brief, I must have danced at least twenty times, and we had ended with the radiant dances, which the King had never seen. Everyone, it is needless to say, congratulated me in a most charming way, but the loveliest of all was Princess Marie, who brought me a large photograph of herself, on which she had written: "In memory of an evening during which you filled my heart with joy."

The day before our departure from Bucharest some money, which was to have been wired me, had not arrived, and I found myself in a genuine predicament. I had twelve people and several thousand pounds of baggage to get to Rome, where I was to make my first appearance on Easter Day.

To arrive there in time we should have to take the train next morning. I went accordingly to the princess, who was the only person whom I knew in Roumania, to ask her if she would come to my assistance.

I called on her at nine o'clock in the morning. I was taken to the second storey of the palace, to a room that was even prettier, if possible, than the one in which I had been received the first time.

The princess received me. She was in her night-robe, and had put on a dressing-gown of white silk over which her beautiful dishevelled hair hung. She was still engaged in her toilet when I arrived, but in order not to make me wait, she bade me come into her little boudoir, where no one would disturb us. The room, filled with well-chosen first editions, was in charming taste. Everywhere there were little draped statuettes on pedestals. Beside the fireplace was a very comfortable corner. In the midst of all these beautiful objects one might have thought oneself in a miniature museum.

I asked her what she liked best among all the things there and she replied, "the rosaries," of which she had quite a collection. What an artist she must be to bring together all these beautiful things.

"This is my room," she said, while we were talking, "in which whatever happens no one is permitted to bother me. I take refuge here from time to time, and remain until I feel myself ready to face the world once more."

I then told her my troubles. She rang a bell, and gave an order to let M. X—— know immediately that Miss Fuller would come to see him with

a card from her, and that M. X—— would kindly do everything in his power to assist Miss Fuller.

I looked at her for some time and then I said to her :

" I should have liked greatly to know you without being aware that you were a princess."

" But," she said, " it is the woman whom you now know and not the princess."

And that was true. I felt that I was in the presence of some one who was really great, even if her birth had not made her so. I am certain that she would have accomplished great things if she had not found her career already mapped out for her from the day of her birth in her father's palace.

Everyone knows that a princess' life precludes liberty, and contains no possibility of breaking with the conventions for the sake of doing something extraordinary or notable. These chains are so strong that if one contrives to break them, it generally happens under the impulse of despair, as a result of irritation and not for the sake of a purely inspired work.

When I arose to take leave of the princess she kissed me and said :

" If ever I come to Paris I shall call on you at your studio."

She caused an attendant to accompany me to the master of ceremonies, with whom I was to go to the bank. There the master of ceremonies communicated Princess Marie's order to the

effect that I was to be accommodated in any way I might desire.

The money I needed was advanced in return for a cheque, and I left Bucharest.

The journey was full of troubles. Vexatious delays occurred. Finally I arrived at Rome, where my appearance had to be postponed until my baggage, lost in transit, had been found. Three thousand people, who had come to my first performance, went away without seeing me. That certainly was very hard luck. If I had been able to foresee all that, I should never have ventured to intrude upon the Princess.

In that case I should not have discovered what an admirable woman she is.

XV

SEVERAL SOVEREIGNS

IN the course of my travels about the world, east, west, north and south, over oceans and across continents, I have had the experience of seeing or of encountering many persons of distinction, including not a few sovereigns and members of royal households.

It has seemed to me that it might be interesting to bring together at this point some of the most typical of the incidents that occur to me. Just as they come, drawn haphazard from memory, without order or sequence, and with no thought of literary composition, I am going to put them simply on paper, one by one.

How I Failed to see Queen Victoria.

One day at Nice some one came and asked me to dance before Queen Victoria. She had just arrived on the Riviera to pass the winter months, as she was accustomed to do every year.

It may well be believed that I was flattered by such a request. I assented, naturally, and set myself to work making all my preparations for this important event.

There was a knock at the door. A maid brought a telegram. It was signed by my manager, and was couched in the following words: "Take train this evening, to sail day after to-morrow; destination, New York."

I replied with a message pleading for a delay, for the purpose of dancing before Queen Victoria.

I received simply the following laconic telegram:

"Impossible. Leave at once. Time is money."

That's why I did not dance before Queen Victoria.

I stop the Queen of the Belgians in the Street.

I was engaged for some performances at Spa. The evening of my first appearance the Queen and Princess Clementine were in the royal box. That was a gala evening, one on which the hall was resplendent with magnificent gowns and jewels.

Everything went off perfectly.

Next morning I went for a walk with my mother. We were crossing the causeway when a carriage, drawn by two spirited horses driven by a middle-aged woman, bore down upon us.

Frightened on account of my mother, I threw up my arms in front of the carriage, which stopped.

The lady allowed us to pass and, while thanking her, I remarked to myself that a woman ought not to drive such lively horses.

I had forgotten the incident when, shortly

after my return to the hotel, I saw the same carriage go by.

Two gentlemen were talking on the landing near us.

"See. There is the Queen," said one of them.

It was the Queen whom I had stopped!

Princely Simplicity.

At the Hague I was asked to give a performance before the Grand Duke and Duchess of Mecklenburg, Princess Victoria of Schaumburg-Lippe and their retinue.

The hall was well filled. I had the Philharmonic Society's orchestra.

This was a gala evening, and in every way a very successful one for me.

Next day on coming down from my room I encountered on the stairway of the hotel a lady with a very sweet expression, who asked me:

"You are Miss Loie Fuller? Your dances interest me greatly. My husband has gone out on the beach. Wouldn't you like to come and talk to him about your lighting effects. I am sure that would prove very interesting to him."

I gladly acquiesced and followed her.

I was delighted to talk to this woman and her husband, who proved to be a most delightful man. I explained to them all my schemes of lighting and my dances. I then took my leave and joined my mother, who was waiting for me.

When I returned to the hotel the proprietor came to me and said :

" You met with great success yesterday, Miss Fuller, and with even greater this morning."

" This morning ? "

" Yes. Do you know who the gentleman is with whom you have just been talking ? "

" No. Who is he ? "

" The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg."

This same day I boarded a street car.

On the car several people appeared to know me. One lady came and sat beside me and began to talk.

When we arrived at our destination I asked her if she would not tell me her name.

" Victoria de Schaumburg-Lippe."

One evening when I was dancing at the Hague the princess was in the hall with Major Winslow and others of her retinue. She sent for me, and asked me to show her one of my robes.

I brought her the robe which I put on for the butterfly dance.

She took the stuff in her hand and said :

" The robe is really wonderful, but it is after all only what you do that counts."

I remember that she asked me to sign a photograph for her. And when I returned to the hotel the manager of the Kurhaus handed to me an exceedingly pretty watch, on the cover of which were engraved these words :

"In memory of the performance given for Princess Victoria."

The Curiosity of the Archduchesses of Austria.

I was once at the Swedish gymnasium at Carlsbad, where machines with electrical vibrations shock you from head to foot. I was just about to dress myself when one of the women of the place came to me, and said :

"Won't you please return to the hall, and pretend to take the electric treatment again in order that the archduchesses, who are there, with a whole crowd of court ladies, may see you ?"

I replied : "Tell the archduchesses that they can see me this evening at the theatre."

The poor woman then declared to me that she had been forbidden to mention their Royal Highnesses, and that they had bidden her get me back into the hall on some pretext or other.

She was so grieved at not having succeeded that I returned to the machines, and had my back massaged, in order that the noble company might look at me at their ease, as they would survey an interesting animal.

They looked at me, all of them, smiling, and while they viewed me I never turned my eyes away from them.

The odd thing was that they did not know that I knew them. I was, therefore, as much

amused by them, and without their perceiving it, as they were amused by me.

How I was not decorated with the Order of the Lion and the Sun of Persia.

During one of the visits that the Shah of Persia pays to Paris, the Marquis and Marquise d'Oyley, who were great friends of the Sovereign and who were very fond of my dancing, brought the Shah to one of my performances at Marigny.

After my appearance on the stage the Marquis and Marquise, accompanied by some dignitaries of the sovereign's retinue, came to my dressing-room and brought me a Persian flag, which they begged me to use in one of my dances.

What could I do with that heavy flag? In vain I racked my brain. I could not discover any way. I could not refuse, and I was unable on the other hand to convince them that it was impossible to try anything so impromptu without running the risk of a failure.

More and more perplexed I made my entrance for the last dance. I had the great flag in my arms. I tried to wave it gracefully, but I did not succeed. I tried to strike a noble attitude, still holding the flag. Again I failed. It was a woollen banner and would not float. Finally I stood stock still, holding the staff upright, in as imposing an attitude as possible. Then I bowed until the curtain fell.

My friends were surprised to observe that my

last dance had displeased his Majesty. The Shah finally told them that he did not see why the Persian flag had been desecrated. No one dared to tell him that the idea had not come from me, but from persons of his retinue, or to inform him how I had received the flag.

My friends, the d'Oyleys, consoled me by saying that my pose had been very noble and that even the flag, falling around me in heavy folds, had produced a very striking effect.

The Shah decorates everybody who has attracted his attention; that is a habit he has acquired. For my part, thanks to the brilliant idea of the dignitaries from the court of Teheran, I have never seen either the tail of the Lion or a ray of the Sun peculiar to Persian decoration.

I have been told on other authority that on this evening the Shah's first thought was of a bomb which, so it had been announced, was to be thrown at him in the hall. He was thinking of this rather than of my person, my dances or even of the Persian flag I "profaned."

My Adventure with a Negro King.

At the Colonial exposition in Marseilles in 1907 I was with some friends in the pavilion of one of the exhibitors when a magnificent negro, six feet high, who looked like some prince from the Thousand and One Nights, came upon the terrace where we sat. He was accompanied by a large retinue.

The other negroes were dressed the same as he, but none of them had his magnificent presence.

Some French officials accompanied the visitors, who, naturally, created a tremendous effect with their costumes, which were simple but exquisitely finished. When they came near I exclaimed :

" He might be called a king out of a fairy tale ! "

They passed before us and took their places in the reception hall.

The proprietor presently came to our group, and asked us if we would not like to assist him in receiving the King of Djoloff in Senegal.

" He is visiting the Exposition as a private citizen," he added. " If you would like to make his acquaintance come and I will present you."

I was charmed.

When I was in the presence of the king, I said quietly to my friends, in a distinct voice and in French :

" What a handsome savage ; I wonder if they are all built on this model in Africa."

I was presented to the king. He extended his hand, and, to my consternation, I heard him say in very good French :

" I am delighted to make your acquaintance, Miss Fuller. I have applauded you frequently. My education was gained in Paris."

I could not repress an exclamation.

" Good heavens ! Then you heard what I said, and you never raised an eyelash ! "

"No, since you did not suppose that I understood you."

I looked at him for a minute or two to find out whether he had been irritated or not. He smiled diplomatically and I felt that we should be friends.

I was dancing at Marseilles at that time. He came to the theatre to see me after the performance.

"What can we do that will give you pleasure in exchange for the great satisfaction that your dances have just brought us?" he asked me.

I thought the matter over a minute.

"I should like it very much if I might be present at one of your religious ceremonies."

The black chief promised to come to my hotel, and to give me an idea of the ritualistic practices of his country.

The next day, accordingly, I made preparations for a tea-party in the hotel garden. Rugs were spread on the grass and everything was in readiness to receive the monarch.

"When will the ceremony begin?" I asked the king as soon as he had arrived.

"We shall say our prayer at six o'clock, just at sunset."

As night came on I observed that the king and his followers began to survey the sky in every direction, and I wondered why. Noting my wonderment, the king told me that they were

endeavouring to get their bearings in order to be certain of the point toward which the sun was tending at the end of his journey.

"We are required," he said, "always to pray with our faces toward the setting sun."

He gave the order to begin the ceremony then and there. I wish I could describe it as perfectly as I saw it.

The unity of the motions of all these men was simply wonderful. All together they said the same brief prayer, and with mechanical precision made the same movement, which, from the point of view of devotion, seemed to have similar importance to the words of their ritual. The large white cloaks, spread over long blue blouses, waved round their bodies. The men prostrated themselves, touched the ground with their foreheads and then raised themselves together. The rhythm and precision were most impressive. It was really very, very beautiful.

After the prayers the king told me that his father had been dethroned and then exiled from Senegal by the French Government. As for himself, in his turn he had been nominated chief of his tribe, for in reality there was no longer a king. He was a French subject, and in his country, which was tributory to France, he was no more than chief of his clan.

But the majesty remained, nevertheless, magnificently expressed in his features.

While we were conversing I asked permission to put some indiscreet questions. After he had consented, all the while smiling his peculiarly winning smile, I asked him if he was married ?

He replied in the affirmative. He had four wives. As I appeared to be surprised to note that he travelled without them, especially in a country where there are so many pretty women, he, in his turn, looked at me for some time, and replied :

" From the point of view of my wives a white woman has neither charm nor beauty."

This surprised me greatly, and I asked him whether that was because they had never seen any white women.

" Oh," he replied, " in any case they would not be jealous of a white woman. It seems to them absolutely impossible that a pale-faced woman can play any part in my life."

" And you ? Are you so sure of that ? If a white woman with long blonde hair should suddenly appear in your country, among your black women, would she not be taken for an angel ? "

" Oh, no. She would be taken for a devil. Angels are black in our Paradise."

This, I must confess, opened new vistas in the domain of religion. It had never before appeared so clear to me that men make their gods in their own image, rather than that the gods make men after theirs.

How the Empress of China Degraded a Mandarin on my Account.

I was dancing in New York when several of Li Hung Chang's followers came to the theatre, Some friends presented me to the American military attaché, Mr. Church, who accompanied the Viceroy.

Thanks to Mr. Church I was able to satisfy my curiosity and become acquainted with these high Chinese dignitaries. When they left for their own country my manager went with them, in the hope that, through their good offices, I might dance at the Chinese court in the presence of the dowager Empress and her son.

As soon as my representative was in China, he cabled me that everything had been arranged and that I was to take the first steamer leaving Vancouver.

After crossing the continent I was on the point of embarking with my mother, when the state of her health caused me the keenest anxiety. Her prostration was so complete that I was obliged to send a message to China, indicating the impossibility of keeping my engagement.

My manager rejoined us utterly dejected.

At Pekin a magnificent reception had been prepared for me. I was to dance before the Emperor and Empress and then in Japan I was to appear

before the Mikado. The theatre of the best Japanese actor, Danjero, was to be put at my disposal. And all that to no purpose whatever. My manager brought back from this oriental country the most marvellous of embroideries, which Li Hung Chang had sent over for me.

I experienced genuine regret at the failure of this trip, then I forgot all about it.

One evening in London one of my friends at dinner found herself seated next to a very high Chinese official. Apropos of the rich colouring of the mandarin's garments, they came to speak about me and my coloured dances, and my friend said to her companion :

" You are acquainted with Loie Fuller, I presume."

" Well, yes, madam," he replied. " I am only too well acquainted with her, if I may say so."

" How is that ? "

" I went to the United States with Li Hung Chang. Loie Fuller's manager accompanied us on our return to China, and, through the influence of the Viceroy, we gained permission for Loie Fuller to appear before the Empress. Just as she was about to leave for Pekin she broke her agreement. It fell upon me to inform her Majesty that Loie Fuller was unable to obey the Imperial mandate. The Empress had me degraded ! That was eight years ago. I lost my yellow jacket, which has only recently been restored to me."

My friend pleaded my case, alleging the condition of my mother's health, and the seriousness of her malady at the time of my failure to report in the celestial empire.

I suppose that it would be too much to expect of His Excellency to ask him to forgive my mistake. If I had known that my failure to appear would be attended with such consequences, I should, instead of cabling to my manager, have forwarded a long dispatch to the Empress herself, telling her the reasons for my failure to keep an engagement. A woman with a heart, even if she be an Empress, could not blame a daughter for doing her duty towards her mother.

How Queen Alexandra did not fail to see me.

One morning the papers said that the King and Queen of England were going to spend several days in Paris.

I was then dancing at the Hippodrome and, remembering what Princess Marie of Roumania had told me, I decided not to let this occasion slip, and I wrote to the Queen herself, asking if she would be kind enough to set aside an hour in which I might give a performance, at her own convenience and whenever she chose.

I should never, indeed, have supposed it possible to ask her to come to the Hippodrome. One of her maids of honour answered the note, saying that Her Majesty's stay was of limited duration,

and that she had already accepted too many invitations to undertake any new engagements.

After that I thought no more of the Queen.

Arriving at a matinee one Thursday, I noticed in front of the Hippodrome quite an impressive line of carriages, all displaying the royal insignia.

"The Queen has sent some one to my matinee," I thought. "She wants to know whether my dances are really worth seeing. If I make a pleasant impression the Queen will perhaps some day ask me to dance before her."

I went into my dressing-room. I had nearly finished my preparations when the manager rushed in post haste calling out:

"It's four o'clock and the Queen has been waiting since half-past two."

"What! The Queen is here! Why didn't you inform me sooner?"

He was too unnerved to make a lengthy explanation. I hurried down and two minutes later I was on the stage.

In the middle of my dance the Queen arose and left the theatre with all her attendants. I saw her rise and go!

I thought the floor would open and engulf me. What had I done to offend her? Was she indignant that I had made her wait? Was this her way of punishing me for my discourtesy, or did my dances displease her? What was I to think?

I went home in utter despair.

I had just realised one of my dearest wishes, that of dancing before the Queen. Never had I experienced such dejection. I should have preferred a thousand times that she had not come.

I learned afterward at the theatre that a telephone message had come shortly after noon to the effect that the Queen wished to see Loie Fuller, but that she would have to leave at four o'clock.

The manager, who had supposed that the Queen was coming to see the Hippodrome, had not attached any importance to the intimation regarding me, and did not even take the trouble to find out whether I was there or not.

Next morning all the papers recorded that the Queen of England had come to the Hippodrome, despite her many appointments and engagements made some time earlier, and so forth and so forth.

There was not a word about me.

However, as I had written to the Queen to ask her to come it seemed to me that I ought to excuse myself for my apparent discourtesy. I wrote to her accordingly, telling her how distressed I was at my failure to appear earlier—a failure that would not have occurred if some one had come to apprise me. I regretted that the message had not been forwarded to me instead of to the manager.

That same evening one of my friends came to tell me that she had written the day before to one of the Queen's maids of honour, whom she knew

Photo Lafitte.

THE DANCE OF THE BUTTERFLY

personally, asking her to come and see me dance at the Hippodrome.

"That will make your new dances celebrated all over the world," said my friend. "The Queen will come, I am certain of it, if it is at all possible."

Overcome with surprise, I looked at my friend, and exclaimed :

"Well, then, that is why she came this afternoon!"

"Has she already come to see you? I should not have expected such promptness."

"She came to the matinee."

And I told my friend the whole story in detail.

She still could not understand why the Queen had left so hastily, and enquired into the reason.

Presently everything was explained.

The Queen had agreed to visit a painter's studio at half-past three and then, at four o'clock, to call upon M. and Mme. Loubet. Nevertheless she remained at the Hippodrome until ten minutes past four. The King went alone to the studio and the Queen arrived late at the President's house.

After that I fully appreciated her kindness, her patience. I still feel endless gratitude to her for having waited so long, for not having left the theatre without seeing, if it was only for a moment, Loie Fuller and her dances.

As for the manager, he is still convinced that the Queen did not come to see Loie Fuller, but the Hippodrome, and only the Hippodrome.

XVI

OTHER MONARCHS

I SHALL always remember with great pleasure my six hundredth appearance in Paris.

I was then dancing at the Athénée. The whole house had been bought up by students. When I came on the stage each spectator threw a bunch of violets at me. It took five minutes to gather up the flowers.

When I had finished dancing, a fresh avalanche of flowers poured upon the stage. During the performance I received from my admirers, along with an album of sketches signed with names, several of which are now famous, an exquisite statuette representing me in a characteristic attitude.

When I was ready to leave the theatre, the students took my horses out of the shafts and drew my carriage themselves. At the Madeleine the crowd was so dense that the police warned us to stop. But as soon as they had learned that it was "La Loie" in whose honour the triumphal procession was decreed, we had permission to go our way without interruption. The young men drew my carriage all the way to Passy, where

I lived. They conscientiously awakened all the inhabitants with their outcries.

Finally we reached the house. I did not know what I was going to do with these boys, but they themselves solved the problem without delay.

After they had rung the bell and as soon as my gate had swung on its hinges they emitted a shout all together, and started to run away as if possessed. I could hear them for a long time afterwards, shouting: "Vive l'art! Vive La Loie!"

I have often wondered whether the police were as lenient on their return.

In Marseilles, at the time of the Colonial Exposition, one of the commissioners of fine arts asked me if I would not like to perform out-of-doors.

That was one of my dearest wishes, and I consented readily.

Preparations were made at once for my performance, which was to be given in the same place where we had admired the King of Cambodia's dancers. The stage was built opposite to the Grand Palais.

The director of the Exposition had placed behind the platform some great plants, in order that I might be relieved against a background of green foliage, which would be particularly favourable to the brilliancy of the figures in the foreground. Below the stage were two little ponds, with sparkling fountains.

The evening of my first appearance arrived. I was feverishly impatient.

Nothing had been done to advertise it to the public of Marseilles, for we regarded this first evening as a kind of rehearsal, which we should repeat a week later, if it met with success. It was only this next performance that we expected to announce formally.

It was a starlight night. There were at least thirty thousand visitors at the Exposition.

The lights were put out and the crowd rushed towards the platform. In spite of its impromptu character the performance was a remarkable success, and the committee decided from this time on to continue to give outdoor performances.

During the second evening, just as the lights were about to be extinguished, a man came and said to me as I was on my way to the stage :

" Just look, before they put the lights out, at the human wave curling at your feet."

I had never seen anything like it.

After the electric lights had been shut off I began to dance. The rays of light enveloped me. There was a movement in the crowd, which reverberated in echoes like the mutterings of a storm.

Exclamations followed, " Ohs " and " Ahs," which fused into a sort of roar, comparable to the wailing of some giant animal.

You can hardly imagine anything like it. It

seemed to me that on my account alone this spectacle was presented by all this moving crowd before me.

A calm ensued. The orchestra, not a very large one, seemed to me utterly ineffective in such a space. The audience, which was seated on the other side of the fountains, certainly could not hear it.

The first dance came to its close. The extinguishing of my lighting apparatus left us, the public and me, in utter darkness. The uproar of the applause became something fantastic in the dead of night. It was like the beating of a single pair of hands, but so powerful that no noise in the world could be compared with it.

I danced four times, and the different sensations expressed by the audience were most remarkable. They gave me the most vivid impression I have ever experienced. It was something immense, gigantic, prodigious.

That day I had a feeling that the crowd was really the most powerful of monarchs.

There are other monarchs as well as kings and crowds. Certain emotions are kings, too.

At Nice, at the Riviera Palace Hotel, I noticed one day at a table near mine a young man of distinguished appearance whose glance met my own several times successively, almost, one would fancy, in spite of himself. During the following days we surveyed each other again and again at meal

times, but without progressing further towards acquaintance.

I had a number of friends with me. He was alone. Gradually my heart went out to him, although we had never exchanged a word. I did not know who he was, and I had no notion of seeking his acquaintance. Yet his brown eyes and his type of personality, calm and simple, exerted a sort of fascination over me. A week later I discovered, to my great confusion, that I was perpetually haunted by his eyes and that I could not forget his smile.

One evening there was a ball at the hotel. I was invited, of course.

As I have already said, I had a great many friends there. All at once, in a corner, I noticed my neighbour of the dining-hall. He spoke to no one. He was not dancing. I began to feel sorry to see him so entirely alone. My sympathy went out more than ever towards him.

Some days later I was engaged for a performance that was to take place at the hotel in honour of a Russian grand duke, two kings and an empress.

I remember that Patti was in the front row. When I appeared before this choice assembly, a single figure persisted in detaching itself from the rest of the crowd. It was the figure of my unknown young man. Who could he be to be noted thus, in the role of an invited guest, among these

princes and princesses? He rested his elbow on the back of his chair. His hand was under his chin. His legs were crossed with easy negligence. He looked at me continuously. Everybody applauded over and over again. He alone did not lift a finger.

Who was this man? Why did his countenance haunt me? Why did he watch me so insistently? Why did he not join in the applause?

The next day, on the verandah, I was comfortably seated in a rocking-chair, all the while wondering who my handsome dark man could be. Coming back to earth I saw him there by my side, ensconced in one of those odd willow seats that enclose you as in a sentry box.

His eyes again met mine. We did not speak, but both of us experienced a deep desire to exchange greetings. Just at that moment the hotel manager came up and began to talk to us. Then, observing that we were not acquainted, he introduced us. I learned then that he was son of an industrial leader of international standing—one of the best known in Paris as well as St. Petersburg and Vienna. Immediately I wanted to know everything about him. He on his side wished me to tell him all sorts of things of which I had never even dreamed. We were at once on terms of delightful intimacy.

A short time after I was obliged to leave Nice. Just as my train was about to go, my good friend

jumped into my carriage and accompanied me as far as Marseilles. There he bade me adieu and returned to Nice.

Letter writing followed, in the course of which he told me how highly he regarded my friendship—more highly in fact than anything else in the world. For my part I thought of him more often than I should care to confess, but I had my wits about me sufficiently to announce to him, at the cost of a great effort of will, that he was too young for our feelings of regard for each other to continue without danger to both, and that he ought to forget me.

Just at this time there was presented to me a viscount, who laid claim to my heart and hand. Need I confess that, with my eyes still filled with pictures of the other man, I could not endure his assiduous importunity. No one is deafer, says a French proverb, than who he is unwilling to hear. And the viscount would not listen to my discouraging remarks.

He seemed to have imposed upon himself, in spite of my rebuffs, which were often severe and always discourteous, the task of bringing me to terms. Undoubtedly, in spite of my reserve and coldness, he might eventually have succeeded if one fine evening he had not dropped out altogether under threat of legal proceedings. He had a well-established reputation as a swindler.

During the time when the viscount was playing his game to win my affections, my good friend's

communications stopped coming. I wrote him several letters. They were never answered.

Some years later, in 1900, I had installed my theatre, as is perhaps still remembered, at the Universal Exposition in Paris.

One day as I was on my way to the theatre I saw at a distance my lover of the days at Nice. My heart began to beat violently.

My friend approached. We were going to pass each other. He had not yet seen me ; for he was walking with his eyes on the ground. Standing still, with my left hand restraining the beating of my heart, I waited, feasting my eyes upon him. He turned his head and passed me.

I was destined not to see him again for a long time.

Meantime, indeed, I learned through a third person that he had told his father of his desire to marry me. A violent scene took place between the two men. The father threatened to disinherit him. The poor boy was sent away, almost by main force, on a voyage round the world.

I have frequently reflected since then on the part the " viscount " played in all this affair, and I should not be astonished to learn that he led some artful embassy against His Majesty King Love.

XVII

SOME PHILOSOPHERS

I HAVE frequently seen monarchs whose profession consisted in ruling the crowd. I have sometimes seen crowds that appeared to me mightier than the greatest of monarchs. More rarely I have encountered philosophers, out of touch with everything, who yet were able to create kingdoms within themselves. These last have seemed to me more affecting than the proudest of monarchs or the most impressive of crowds. Characteristic traits of some of these are worthy of being described here. I should like to try to do so, because of the emotions they have aroused in me.

We were living at Passy, my mother and I, in a house situated in the centre of a garden. One day I heard some animated music coming from the street. I ran to the gate to look at the makers of this joyful harmony. A man and a woman were passing. The man played an accordion as he walked with short steps. He was blind, and his wife led him. The music was so sprightly, so different from the folk who were making it, that I hailed the pair. I wanted the man to play in the

LOIE FULLER IN HER GARDEN AT PASSY

garden, behind the house, so that my mother, who was paralysed, might hear him. They consented very willingly. I made them sit down under a tree, near my mother's chair, and the man played on the accordion until a servant came to say that lunch was served. I asked the man and his wife if they had eaten. When I discovered they had had nothing since the day before, I told the maid they were going to share our meal.

At table we had a long conversation. The man had always been blind. I asked him if he could perceive difference among colours. No. But he was able, at least, to tell without fear of making a mistake, whether the weather was clear or cloudy, dull or pleasant. He was extremely sensitive to differences of texture.

I placed a rose in his hand and asked him what it was. Without hesitation and without raising the flower to his nostrils he replied :

" It is a rose."

Almost immediately, grasping it gently in his fingers, he added :

" It is a beautiful one, too, this rose, very beautiful."

A little more and he would have told me whether it was a *La France*, a *Maréchal Niel*, or some other species of rose.

As he had used the word " beautiful " I asked him what seemed to him the most beautiful thing in the world.

" The most beautiful thing alive is woman."

I then asked him who the person was in whose company I had found him. His voice took on a tender tone as he said :

" It is my wife, my dear wife."

After that I looked with more attention at the self-effacing and almost dumb soul who accompanied the blind musician. Confused, embarrassed, she had lowered her eyes, which she kept obstinately fixed upon an apron, of a faded blue, on which the patches appeared to be more extensive than the original material.

She was unattractive, poor thing, and at least twenty years older than her companion.

Quietly, without concerning myself with the beseeching looks the poor woman cast at me from under wrinkled and reddened eyebrows, I asked the blind musician :

" She satisfies you, does she ? "

" Certainly."

" You find her beautiful ? "

" Very beautiful."

" More beautiful than other women ? "

As he had peopled his darkness with beauty my optimist replied :

" I do not say that, for all women are beautiful. But she is better, yes, better than most of them, and it is that which, in my sight, constitutes the purest beauty."

"What makes you think she is better than the others?"

"Oh, everything. Her whole life, her whole manner of existence as regards me."

And in words so convincing that for a moment I felt that he could see, he added:

"Just look at her, my good lady. Isn't it a fact that goodness is written on her face?"

The woman, with her eyes lowered, kept looking at her blue apron. I then asked the blind man how he had made his living up to this time, and how they had become acquainted, he and his companion.

"I used to be, owing to infirmity, a real burden upon my family. I did whatever I could but I could not do much. I washed the dishes, lighted the fire, picked the vegetables, swept the floor, washed the windows, made the beds—perhaps badly, but at any rate I did all that, and although we were very poor at home they kept me. The day came, however, when my mother died. Then it was my father's turn. I had to leave the empty house. I went on the road armed with my accordion, asking for alms. My accordion became my best friend. But I blundered along the roads. Then I met my dear companion who is with me, and I married her."

She was a cook, the woman told me this herself in an undertone, who had become too old to keep her place, and who consented to join her

fate with that of the wandering blind man, serving as his guide along the roads. The blind man found this arrangement a blessing from Heaven, a kindness bestowed upon him by Providence. They were married without delay.

"But how do you manage to live?" I asked.

"Well, it is not always easy to make both ends meet, for alas! now and then, one of us falls ill. We are getting old, you understand. When it is not fatigue that gets the better of us, then there is always the cold. There are times when we cannot go out. Then it is necessary to take a notch in one's girdle."

Each day they visited one district of Paris. They had divided the city into blocks, and they sometimes walked miles before arriving at their destination, for they lived far from the centre, in one of the poorest suburbs.

"What day do you go by here?"

"Every Sunday, before mass. Many people of this quarter go to church, and we encounter them going and coming."

"Do they give you something?"

"It is a rich neighbourhood. We have several very good clients."

"Good what?" I asked. "Good clients?"

"Yes, good clients," he repeated simply.

"And who are these clients?"

"They are servants of the rich."

"Servants?"

" Yes, some of them are very good. They give us old clothes; food and money when they can."

" And the rich people themselves ? "

" We do not see them often. This is the first time a client has ever invited us to lunch, and we have been going through this street for seven years. No one ever asked us to come in before."

" What do you do when you are tired ? "

" We sit down on a bench or on one of the steps, and we eat whatever we have in our pockets. Here we eat while they are at church."

" Very well. You will have no need to bring anything to eat the day you come by here. I invite you for every Sunday."

I expected impassioned thanks. The man said simply :

" We thank you very much, good lady."

Shortly after, I left for a long tour in America, and during my absence my domestics received them every Sunday. From their point of view I was merely a sure client.

One day I gave them tickets for a great concert. I was in the hall and observed them.

The woman was overcome at seeing so many fashionable people. As for the man, his features aglow with an unearthly light, his head thrown a little back after the way of the blind, he was in ecstasy, intoxicated with the music.

After four years they disappeared. I never saw them again.

The man, whom I had seen to be failing, probably died, and the woman, the poor old thing, so unattractive in her blue apron, undoubtedly did not dare to return alone.

At Marseilles I saw another blind man, a very old man, seated on a folding stool against a wall.

Beside him stood a basket, guarded by a very young dog, who sniffed at all the passers-by and barked after each one. I stopped to talk to the old man.

"Do you live all alone?" I asked him.

"Oh, no," he replied. "I have two dogs. But I cannot bring the other one with me. He makes a continual disturbance, leaps and fidgets so much that he never gets fat and any one would think to see him that I don't give him anything to eat. As a matter of fact, you see, I cannot show him without being ashamed of him. People would suppose that I was allowing him to die of hunger. Anyway I need only one dog here. As for the other I leave him at the house, where he serves as watch dog."

"Oh, you have a house," I said.

"That is to say, I have a room, I call it my house."

"Who does your cooking for you? Who makes the fire at your house."

"I do," he replied. "I light a match and then by the crackling of the wood I know whether it has caught."

"How do you clean your vegetables?"

"Oh, that is easy. I can tell by the feeling when the potatoes are well peeled."

"And the fruits and the salad?"

"Oh, that is something we do not have very often."

"I suppose you eat meat."

"Not very often, either. We have bread and vegetables, and when we are rich we buy some cheese."

"Why does your dog sniff so at every one passing by? Why does he bark so spitefully?"

"Ah, madam, you see each time that any one hands me a sou, thanks to his grimaces, I give him a little piece of bread. There, look at him now."

At this moment somebody had just thrown a coin into the blind man's bowl. The old man drew from his pocket a little piece of dry bread.

The animal fell upon it with such a cry of joy that one might have supposed he had just received the daintiest titbit in the world. He nearly devoured his master with caresses.

"At what time do you eat? Do you go home to your lunch?"

"No. I carry my lunch in a basket."

I looked. It contained some crusts of bread and nothing else.

"Is that all that you have to eat."

"Why, yes. Like the dog, I don't ruin my digestion."

"Where do you drink when you are thirsty?"

He pointed to a corner of the alley, where there was a little fountain, alongside of which hung a goblet attached to a chain.

"And the dog?"

"He leads me to the fountain when he is thirsty and I give him his share."

"Do you come here every day?"

"Yes. This is the entrance to the baths. We do a good business here."

"How much do you make a day?"

"Twenty sous, sometimes thirty. That depends on the day. There have been times when we have made more than two francs. But that is rare. I have my rent to pay and three mouths to feed, my two dogs and myself."

"Where do you get your clothes?"

"They are given me by one and another. The butcher, the grocer, the cabinetmaker, these are very kind to me."

"Are you happy all alone so?"

"I am not all alone. I have my dogs. The only thing I lack is my eyesight. But I thank Providence every day for keeping me in good health."

It was in consequence of a malignant fever that he had lost his eyesight, for unlike my blind man at Passy, this man was not born blind. Formerly he had been able to admire nature, to see pretty girls in a country flooded with sunlight, to enjoy

with his own eyes the smile in other eyes, in eyes tender and well loved. In short he had seen. What sadness his must be, to be unable to see again !

With much diplomacy I asked him about this.

He had far less difficulty in answering me.

" I used to admire many pretty things," he said. " I still have them carefully enclosed under my eyelids. I see them again whenever I wish, just as if they were there before me once again. And so, you see, as these are things of my youth it seems to me that, in spite of everything, in spite of being such an old hulk as I am, I have remained young. And I thank the dear Lord for having been kind enough not to have made me blind from birth."

" And how old are you ? "

" Eighty years, madam."

This old man had a long walk before him to get back to his residence. As I commiserated him regarding this, he replied :

" There is no reason for complaining, madam, I have such a good guide, such a brave little comrade ! "

He made an almost theatrical gesture, and said, in a voice filled with emotion :

" My dog ! "

" Does he guide you through the streets of Marseilles ? "

" He does ! "

" And no accident happens to you ? "

"Never. One day I was crossing a street. My dog pulled at me so hard from behind that I fell backward. I was just in time. A step more and I should have been crushed by a tramcar, which grazed me. I am mighty lucky, come now, to have a dog like that."

In all circumstances this old man was willing to see only the favourable side of things. That side, at least with the eyes of imagination, the blind man could see.

One day the charwoman who came to our house at Passy to help the servants arrived very late.

As she was ordinarily exceedingly punctual, I reproached her in a way I should not have done if she had been habitually unpunctual. Here is what I found out about this brave woman.

Three years before one of her neighbours, a working woman, had had an attack of paralysis. This neighbour was poor, old, without relatives and no one would bother with her. The poor little charwoman, encumbered with a drunken husband and six children, agreed to take care of the paralytic and her home if the other neighbours would be willing to provide the bare necessities of life. She succeeded in overcoming the selfishness of each and every one in the warmth of her kindness. From that time on she never ceased in the rare hours when she was free to look after the paralytic. She attended to the housework, the cooking, the washing. The neighbour's condition grew worse.

The case was one of complete paralysis. The assistance which she had to give to this half-dead woman was often of the most repulsive kind. Always smiling, always tidy, always cheerful, she gave to the human hulk she had taken under her protection the most thorough and intelligent care.

My little charwoman had always, at all times, been cheerful. I wondered what kind of gaiety she would exhibit when at last the paralytic's death should free her from the load with which she had benevolently burdened her life. This morning, the morning on which she came late, she was crying. She wept warm tears.

I supposed that my reproach had caused this tearful outpouring. But not at all. She said to me between sobs :

" I am crying—crying—because—she's dead—the poor woman."

It was her neighbour the paralytic for whom she wept.

In the north of Ireland I once saw some children barefooted in the snow, during an intensely cold February. With some friends I visited the poor quarter of a provincial city, where, I was told, people working in the mills lived twelve or even more in cabins containing but two rooms.

We placed no especial credence in these stories and we decided to look into the matter for ourselves. It was all true, nevertheless. In some cases the conditions were even worse.

On reaching the district in question we noticed that a little boy had followed our carriage. At a trot sharp enough to run his little legs off he continued for about a mile and a half, all in the hope of getting twopence.

The small boy came forward to open the door of our carriage. The coachman rebuked him brutally. The child had so odd an expression that I began to talk to him. He had five brothers and sisters. He did the best he could to pick up something in the streets, and he made from sixpence to eightpence a day. Just at present he was trying to get a little money to buy some coal for his mother.

I, doubting the truth of these statements, made him take me to his hut, which he had pointed out to us.

"That is where I live, madam."

Certainly there was no coal in the house, but there were three sick people. The father swept snow in the streets to make a few pennies, for in this cold weather the mill where he worked was not running.

There was complete wretchedness, frightful wretchedness, irreparable wretchedness. And yet our little lad sang while he trotted behind our carriage, just as his father whistled as he swept the snow.

Is not misery the school, the sadly sovereign school, of philosophy ?

XVIII

HOW I DISCOVERED HANAKO

EVERYTHING that comes from Japan has always interested me intensely. Consequently it is easy to understand with what pleasure I came into relationship with Sada Yacco, and why I did not hesitate to assume financial responsibility for her performances when she decided to come to Europe with her whole company.

Sada Yacco had brought with her a troupe of thirty people. These thirty cost me more than ninety of another nationality would have done; for apart from everything that I was obliged to do to entertain them, I had constantly to go down on my knees to secure permission to attach to each train that carried them an enormous car laden with Japanese delicacies, rice, salted fish, mushrooms and preserved turnips—delicacies were necessary to support the existence of my thirty Japanese, including Sada Yacco herself. During one whole season I paid the railway companies 375,000 francs for transportation, but that cost me much less than to pay all the debts I should have been obliged

to assume from Lisbon to St. Petersburg if I had decided to send my Japanese home.

I tried for a long time to get my money back by transporting my Nipponese and their viands up and down the earth, but, weary of the struggle, I finally assembled another troupe, which was as good as the first one and which was willing to travel without a cargo of rice and salted fish.

"Business is business" I am well aware. I decided, therefore, to endure bravely the losses I had incurred, and I was thinking of quite another subject when fortune appeared to smile on me again.

In London there was a Japanese troupe looking for an engagement. The actors came to see me. They made some ridiculous claims and I sent them away. But as they did not find an engagement, we came to an understanding, and I found an impresario for them, who took them to Copenhagen.

I went to Denmark, too, and I expected to look after the affairs of these Japanese and attend to my own business as well.

When they arrived at Copenhagen I saw the whole troupe for the first time. They all came to greet me at my hotel and played some piece or other of their own invention.

I noticed at that time, among the comedians, a charming little Japanese woman, whom I should have been glad to make the star of the company. Among these Japanese, however, women did not

count for much, all the important roles being taken by men. She was, nevertheless, the only one who had attracted my attention. She played a minor part, it is true, but very intelligently, and with the oddest mimicry. She was pretty withal, refined, graceful, queer, and so individual as to stand out, even among those of her own race.

When the rehearsal was over I gathered the actors together and said to them :

" If you are going to remain with me you will have to obey me. And if you do not take this little woman as your star you will have no success."

And as she had a name that could not be translated, and which was longer than the moral law, I christened her on the spot Hanako.

To make a long story short they assented to my request, and lengthened out my protégée's role. In reality the play had no climax. I therefore made one for it then and there. Hanako had to die on the stage. After everybody had laughed wildly at my notion, and Hanako more than all the others ; she finally consented to die. With little movements like those of a frightened child, with sighs, with cries as of a wounded bird, she rolled herself into a ball, seeming to reduce her thin body to a mere nothing so that it was lost in the folds of her heavy embroidered Japanese robe. Her face became immovable, as if petrified, but her eyes continued to reveal intense animation. Then some little hiccoughs convulsed her, she

made a little outcry and then another one, so faint that it was hardly more than a sigh. Finally with great wide-open eyes she surveyed death, which had just overtaken her.

It was thrilling.

The evening of the first appearance came. The first act was successful. The actors acquired confidence and entered into the spirit of their parts, a fact which caused them to play wonderfully well. I was obliged to leave after the first act, for I was dancing at another theatre, but some one came to tell me at the close of the performance that Hanako had scored more than a success; it was a veritable triumph. To her it came as a genuine surprise, but one that was not more extraordinary than the anger provoked by her success among the actors of the company. The box office receipts, however, somewhat assuaged their sensitiveness, and I was able to give to the feminine member of the troupe a longer part in the new play, rehearsals of which were just beginning.

From this time on Hanako was in high favour. Everywhere she was obliged to double the number of her performances. After Copenhagen she made a nine months' tour of Europe. Her success in Finland bordered upon popular delirium. Finland, it is interesting to note, has always evinced the greatest sympathy for Japan. This was during the time of the Russian-Japanese War.

She played in all the royal theatres of Europe.

LOIE FULLER'S ROOM AT THE FOLIES-BERGÈRE

Then after a tour in Holland she came finally to Paris.

The Japanese and Hanako stayed with me for nearly a year. At the close of their contract they gave some performances at Marseilles and then dispersed. Some of them went home, others proceeded to Paris or elsewhere. Time passed, and I heard nothing more about my Japanese, when one day I received a letter from Hanako, who told me that she was at a cheap concert hall at Antwerp, where she had to sing and dance for the amusement of sailors, patrons of the place. She was all alone among strangers, and the man who had brought her to this degrading pursuit inspired her with mortal terror. She wrote me that she wanted at all costs to be saved from her fate, but that, without assistance, the thing was utterly impossible. She had gone from Marseilles to Antwerp with other actors of the troupe to take a steamer for Japan. At Antwerp she and her travelling companion had fallen into the hands of a low-lived compatriot, and she called me to her rescue.

One of the actors of the company happened to be in Paris, and I sent him to Antwerp with two of my friends. After numerous difficulties and thanks to the police, they were able to enter into communication with Hanako and tell her that they had come to take her away.

One evening she succeeded in escaping with her

companion, and, with no baggage except the little Japanese robes which they wore, they took the train for Paris.

Hanako had been obliged to leave behind her little pet Japanese dog, lest by taking it away from the house she should arouse the proprietor's suspicion. They reached Paris shrouded in the European cloaks I had sent them, which were far too long, and hid them completely.

Presently I found myself in Paris, manager of one of the most gifted Japanese artists, but, alas! with no company to support her. I was puzzled to know what to do with and what to do for a kind, gentle, sweet little Japanese doll.

I first tried to find out if some one would not engage Hanako, then an entire stranger to Paris, and a small, a very small company for one of the minor theatres.

I received from one of the managers a remarkable answer. If I could guarantee that the play which Hanako would present was a good one he would engage her.

The play? Why there was no play. But I was not bothered by a little detail like that, and I explained that Hanako would offer a wonderful play, one that was easy to understand whether you knew Japanese or not.

Then I signed a contract for ten performances on trial. A contract? Yes, it was a contract. And I had not secured my actors yet. And I

had no play yet. I had, altogether, Hanako, her maid and a young Japanese actor. I was not discouraged, however. I undertook to find another actor. I secured one in London, thanks to an agent. Then I went to work to construct a play for four characters. There were two major roles and two supernumeraries. The result of my efforts was "The Martyr."

A great difficulty now arose. The question came up of procuring wigs, shoes, costumes and various accessories. But here again luck helped me out. They made a very successful first appearance at the Théâtre Moderne in the Boulevard des Italiens. The play was given thirty presentations instead of ten and twice a day, at a matinee and in the evening. Presently the manager said to me:

"If your actors have another play as good as that one I would keep them a month longer."

Naturally I declared they had another play, a better one than the first, and I signed a new contract.

New stage settings, new costumes and new accessories were necessitated. The result was a new tragedy called "A Drama at Yoshiwara."

While the new play was running the manager of the Palais des Beaux-Arts at Monte Carlo made a very important offer for my Japanese, for three performances. I accepted. The troupe left for Monaco, where they gave twelve performances instead of three. In the meantime a small theatre,

that of the Musée Grevin, proposed to engage my Nipponese for a month in a new play which was to be a comedy. To suit the purposes of this theatre we wrote "The Japanese Doll." Next the Little Palace offered a month's engagement for a play that was to be a tragi-comedy. There my Japanese played the "Little Japanese Girl." Finally they went to the Treteau Royal, where Mr. Daly engaged them for their six plays, a circumstance that compelled me to increase their *repertoire* by three new pieces, "The Political Spy," "The Japanese Ophelia," and "A Japanese Tea House."

Hanako finally began a tour of Switzerland with the company. Mr. Daly suddenly wanted Hanako to appear in New York, and to break off this trip I needed more imagination and took more trouble than in writing a dozen plays. Then I was obliged, still on Mr. Daly's account, to break an agreement for a tour in France.

Such is the history of my relations with Hanako, the great little actress from Japan. As it is always fitting that a story of this kind shall end with a wedding, I may say that, conforming to the tradition, the actor Sato, whom I sent to release Hanako at Antwerp, is now the husband of the little Japanese doll.

XIX

SARDOU AND KAWAKAMI

"WHO is author of the play that Sada Yacco is playing?" a writer friend asked me one day.

"Kawakami, her husband."

"Really. Well, then he ought to belong to the Society of Authors."

And we proposed his name.

On the appointed day I took him to the Society of Authors. I was quite surprised to note that the gentlemen of the committee had turned out to a man to receive him.

We were ushered into the committee room, where these gentlemen awaited us, seated round a large table.

Sardou, who presided, received us with a very appropriate address. He greeted Kawakami as the man who first forged a literary bond between France and Japan. He warmly congratulated Kawakami on having been the first manager who had the courage to bring a company from his distant native land to a city where no one understood a word of Japanese. He

complimented Kawakami and complimented him again, and ended by calling him his "dear comrade."

After which he sat down.

There was silence, and I knew that they were expecting some response from Kawakami. But he seemed in no wise to suspect that he had furnished the theme for the discourse just ended. He remained calmly in his seat and surveyed the gentlemen one by one.

I realised the necessity for immediate action. Some one must sacrifice himself. In the present crisis, cost what it may, it devolved on me to intervene. Turning toward Kawakami, I asked, in pantomime: "Do you understand?"

He shook his head to say no.

Thereupon M. Sardou added:

"Speak to him, Miss Fuller. Translate to him what has just been said."

Finally, since there was nothing else for it, I summoned all my strength, and at some length I explained in good English to Kawakami, who did not understand a syllable of it, that this speech Sardou had prepared expressly for him because he was a Japanese author, and because the French were greatly pleased that he had brought his Japanese company to Paris, and that the Society of Authors received him with pleasure. I then explained to Kawakami, with the indispensable assistance of appropriate gestures, that

the time had arrived for him to get up and say something in Japanese.

Was it not the essential fact that these gentlemen believed that M. Sardou's words had been translated?

Kawakami immediately arose and delivered an address which must have been most carefully thought out. To judge from the seriousness of the orator's aspect, and from the length of his harangue Kawakami is a great political orator. When he had finished he sat down, while everybody looked at him admiringly, with beaming faces.

No one, however, had understood a single word of what he said. I, naturally, was in the same plight as the others. There ensued a second somewhat painful silence, broken by Sardou asking:

"What did he say, Miss Loie?"

That was a poser. For there was no reason why I should understand Japanese any better than these gentlemen of the Society of Authors.

As, however, I had a feeling that I was a little responsible for what took place, in order not to cause them any disappointment I screwed my courage up again, rose and began to make a speech. Those who know me can fancy what this speech was like. It was in French, but I would take my oath that it was as hard to understand as Kawakami's Japanese. However, I managed to ring the changes on the words "Japanese grati-

tude, Japanese pride," and I did my best to paint in glowing colours Kawakami's joy at having established a bond between the theatrical worlds of the two countries.

My speech was only a bad imitation of what M. Sardou had said, and what I had vaguely understood of Kawakami's views. I tried, in fact, to say what Kawakami would have said in my place and, with as much emphasis and big sincere words, I came to a close. Then before sitting down I asserted once more : " There, gentlemen, that is what he said."

My role of being an interpreter without understanding the language was finished. There was a storm of hurrahs and the ice was broken. The conversation became general, and the meeting ended in being a great success so far as Kawakami was concerned. It was Kawakami's day. As for me, I was not in it.

The result of this meeting was that Kawakami played Sardou's *La Patrie* in Japan, obtaining for this work a success as great as for the Shakespearean plays he likewise represents there, and whose parts he plays with such truth that he is called at home, " the Japanese Mark Antony."

He brought to the theatres of his native land certain modifications, which have radically changed their dramatic methods. It is customary in Japan to begin a play at nine or ten o'clock in the morning and to make it last at least until

midnight. One lunches and dines at the theatre during the intervals, which, it is needless to say, are interminable.

Kawakami changed that condition of things by beginning at half-past six or at seven o'clock in the evening and ending before midnight. And how do you suppose he managed to prevent people eating between the acts ? for that was the most difficult innovation. He made the intervals so short that there was no time even to go to the refreshment-room. It was really an easy thing to compel the public to alter its habits. Instead of appealing to people's reason, Kawakami simply made it impossible for them to continue doing what they had previously done.

European theatres are now building in Japan, in order that actors from Europe may go there and produce their plays. The Nipponese public is learning to give them a more favourable reception.

All that is due to Kawakami and to his sympathic reception at the Society of Authors. I cannot refrain from congratulating myself on this, for, after all, it was I who "translated" the addresses and thus sealed in words this new *entente cordiale.*

That brings to mind a little story.

It happened at the Athénée in 1893. We were rehearsing the "Salome" of Armand Silvestre and Gabriel Pierné. Behind the scenes one day I encountered a man with an enormous muffler,

which went several times around his neck, and a tall hat of a style that came down over his ears. I chatted with him in the indifferent French I had at command, and this without knowing who he was. While talking to him I noticed a hole in his shoe. He was aware of my discovery, I suppose, for he said to me :

"I had that hole made expressly. I prefer a hole in my shoe to a pain in my foot."

This man was Victorien Sardou.

A word more about my Japanese friends.

Kawakami has a son who was five years old when I first saw him. He passed his time drawing everything around him.

I observed in his simple childish drawings a very peculiar manner he affected in representing people's eyes. They were always drawn like billiard balls emerging from the face. I asked Kawakami :

" Don't you think that it is an odd way to draw eyes ? "

" Yes, but it is because the European eye is quite like the eye of a fish," the father replied.

That aroused in me a desire to know more intimately his impressions of our race, and I asked him what Europeans look like from the Japanese point of view.

" All Europeans," he said, " resemble pigs. Some of them look like dirty pigs, some like clean pigs ; but they all look like pigs."

I never said anything about this to M. Sardou.

XX

AN EXPERIENCE

IT happened in February, 1902. I arrived at Vienna with my Japanese company, headed by Sada Yacco. We had with us an artist to whom I had been delighted to be of service. In Paris my close friend, Madame Nevada, the celebrated American singer, had presented her to me, and the dancer had given me a performance as an example of her skill. She danced with remarkable grace, her body barely covered by the flimsiest of Greek costumes, and she bade fair to become somebody Since then she has arrived. In her I saw the ancient tragic dances revived. I saw the Egyptian, Greek and Hindoo rhythms recalled.

I told the dancer to what height I believed that she could attain, with study and persistent work. A short time after I left for Berlin, where she rejoined me. During our stay there she was ill most of the time and could do hardly any work.

Finally, on our return to Vienna, we began our studies seriously, and I decided to organise some evening affairs as a means of bringing her before

an audience of people capable of appreciating and understanding her.

To this end I took her to every drawing-room that was open to me in Vienna. Our first call was upon the wife of the English ambassador, whom I had known at Brussels when her husband represented the United Kingdom there. On this day I came near going in alone and leaving my dancer in the carriage, because of her personal appearance. She wore an Empire robe, grey, with a long train and a man's hat, a soft felt hat, with a flying veil. Thus gowned she appeared to so little advantage that I rather expected a rebuff. However, I pleaded my dancer's cause so warmly, and I obtained a promise that both the ambassador and his wife would be present on the first evening.

I went next to see the Princess of Metternich.

"My dear Princess," I said to her, "I have a friend, a dancer, who has not yet succeeded in coming to the front because she is poor and has no one to launch her. She is very talented, and I am anxious that Viennese drawing-rooms shall come to know her. Are you willing to help me?"

"With pleasure. What must I do?"

"To begin with, come to my hotel, and see her dance."

"Why, certainly. You can count absolutely upon me."

The princess is impressively simple. Where

one expects to find a *grande dame* arrayed in finery and of lofty bearing, one discovers a charming woman, receptive, simple, witty, and possessed of extraordinary youthfulness of manner. When Prince Metternich was ambassador at Paris she was given the nickname one applied to Adelaide of Savoy; she was called "the pretty, homely one." The princess went one better by saying, "I am the best dressed ape in Paris." I wonder if she could ever have been plain. There is such intelligence implicit in every feature of her face.

Under the light grey locks the black eyes have preserved the sprightliness, the sweetness of youth. Her smile gave me confidence. It was thus that I had always pictured the gentlewoman, revealed by everything that she is herself and not solely by the things that surround her or by the high rank she occupies in society.

I had heard it said that this woman had the greatest influence at the Austrian court, and looking at her I understood it. Her carriage, her countenance and everything else inspired respect and affection.

When I took leave her last words were:

"I shall be delighted to help your friend since I shall be thus able to please you."

I went away, gratified and thankful on my own account as well as on my friend's.

Then I went to the Embassy of the United States. I saw the ambassador immediately, but

I was obliged to wait to see his wife. She entered breezily, bringing with her, as it were, a whiff of her own far west. Kind, energetic, jolly, she was a free born woman, cordial and sincere, and I felt at once that I could rely on her.

While I spoke of my protégée, the ambassador's wife remembered having seen her dance at her sister's house in Chicago some years before. The dancing, to tell the truth, had not particularly interested her, but if it would be of any help to us she would be very glad to come to our performance.

Sure of having a good audience I returned to the hotel and told my friend that the occasion she had desired so long had at last arrived.

I decided to give an evening for the press on the same day on which my friend would appear at a matinée before the Princess and members of the diplomatic corps.

I then sent invitations to the Viennese artists and art critics. When the day came everything was in readiness. I had engaged an orchestra; the hall had floral decorations; the buffet was most appetising.

The English ambassador, his wife and daughter, were among the first arrivals. There was a great gathering in front of the hotel to admire their carriage with the magnificent liveries.

Then came the turn of the American ambassador and his wife, in a black carriage, very simple,

but very elegant. Finally all the others arrived. Suddenly the princess' turnout, so well known to all Vienna, paused before the door.

After having welcomed my guests I begged them to excuse me for a minute and I went in to see the débutante.

It was half-past four. In ten minutes she was due to begin. I found her with her feet in warm water, in the act of dressing her hair, in a very leisurely manner. Startled, I begged her to hurry, explaining that she ran the risk through her negligence of offending an audience that would definitely give her her start. My words were without effect. Very slowly she continued her preparations. Feeling that I could do nothing with her I returned to the drawing-room and made the greatest effort of my life to get out of this delicate situation.

I was obliged to make a little impromptu address. What I said I have never known, but I remember having vaguely fashioned something like a dissertation on dancing and its value in relation to the other arts and to nature. I said that the young woman whom we were going to see was not an imitator of the dancers depicted on the Etruscan vases and the frescoes at Pompeii. She was the living reality of which these paintings were only an imitation. She was inspired by the spirit which had made dancers of them.

All at once she made her entrance, calm and

indifferent, looking as if she did not care in the least what our guests thought of her.

But it was not her air of indifference that surprised me most. I could hardly refrain from rubbing my eyes. She appeared to me nude, or nearly so, to so slight an extent did the gauze which she wore cover her form.

She came to the front, and, while the orchestra played a prelude from Chopin she stood motionless, her eyes lowered, her arms hanging by her side. Then she began to dance.

Oh, that dance, how I loved it ! To me it was the most beautiful thing in the world. I forgot the woman and all her faults, her absurd affectations, her costume, and even her bare legs. I saw only the dancer, and the artistic pleasure she was giving me. When she had finished no one spoke.

I went up to the Princess. She said to me in a low voice :

" Why does she dance with so little clothing on ? "

Then I suddenly realised the strange attitude of the public, and guided by a sort of inspiration, I answered in tones loud enough so that everybody should hear :

" I forgot to tell you how kind our artist is. Her trunks upon which she relied absolutely for the day have not arrived. Accordingly, rather than give you the disappointment of not seeing

her dance, she appeared before you in the gown in which she practises."

At nine o'clock the press performance took place. Everybody was enthusiastic, but none more so than I.

Next day I arranged a third performance for painters and sculptors, and this affair was likewise a great success.

A lady finally asked my friend to dance at her house. The star demanded a very high price. Persuaded by me the lady consented to pay the big fee my dancer claimed to be worth. For several weeks her success increased day by day.

Then, all at once, people seemed to have forgotten the dancer. She was engaged only rarely, but I was not discouraged.

Meantime, I had forgotten to mention it, my friend's mother had joined us at Vienna, and in place of one guest I now had two.

A little while after these performances we went to Budapesth, where I gave a new entertainment to launch my protégée. I invited all the best people of the city to this.

The leading actress of the Théâtre National heard of the affair, and was anxious to take part in it. I invited the theatrical managers as I had done at Vienna. This time one of them was to make up his mind regarding an engagement. The next day he came to see me, and proposed twenty performances in one of the first theatres

of Budapesth. My friend was to rehearse, beginning the next day. On that same day I had an interminable rehearsal with my Japanese actors, and I was detained from home until late in the afternoon. On returning to the hotel I learned that the dancer and her mother had gone to Vienna to give there an evening performance I had arranged for her before our departure. My orchestra leader accompanied them. I was, I must confess, a little surprised at the abruptness with which they left, but I thought no more about it until my orchestra leader returned.

He came back alone. At first he evaded questions. Then he confessed that these ladies did not expect to rejoin me. I could not, and would not, believe him.

"Very well," he said. "These are the precise words which the mother uttered while we were on the train. 'Now that she has started you,' she said, to her daughter, 'you have no more use for her.' To which the daughter replied, 'Well, I haven't the least desire to go back to Loie.'"

When these ladies were ready to return to Budapesth they allowed my orchestra leader to go without sending any message to me. I telegraphed to find out if I was not to see them again. My dancer replied with a telegram so worded: "Only in case you will deposit to my credit ten thousand francs in a Viennese bank before nine o clock to-morrow morning."

This proceeding was all the more cruel as she knew that I had just lost more than one hundred thousand francs through a Viennese manager who had broken his contract with my Japanese company. Besides, my expenses were very heavy and I was badly embarrassed. After I left Budapesth the dancer came there to fill the engagement I had secured for her. Then she went to Vienna and gave some performances there. I have been told that she went to all the people to whom I had presented her and asked them to take tickets. She thus disposed of seats amounting to some thousands of florins. Everybody was ready to help her, including the wife of the English ambassador and the Princess of Metternich. Above all, I must have gained a reputation as an impostor, for my friend continued to appear in public in what I had called her practising gown.

Some years later at Brussels I learned that my dancer said to somebody who wanted to know whether she was acquainted with Loie Fuller that she did not know me.

XXI

AMERICAN AFFAIRS

A STRANGER, and especially a Frenchman who has never travelled in America simply cannot imagine what our country is like. A Frenchman may get an idea of Germany without having seen it; of Italy, without having been there; of India even, without having visited it. It is impossible for him to understand America as it is.

I had proof of the truth of this observation in certain circumstances that were altogether unexpected. This experience I recall frequently as one that was peculiarly amusing, so amusing indeed that I regard the incident as one of the most comic I have ever encountered.

The hero of the adventure was a young journalist and man about town named Pierre Mortier. One might imagine that from the fact of his profession, which usually gives those who follow it a reasonable smattering of everything, that he would be less liable to surprise and astonishment than some shop assistant or railway employee. The actual occurrences proved the contrary.

But let us view this farce from the rising of the curtain.

I embarked on a steamer at Cherbourg, with my mother and some friends, bound for New York. Pierre Mortier came on board to offer his best wishes for a delightful voyage. We made him inspect our state-rooms, my friends and I, and we shut him in one of them. In vain he battered the wooden door with fist and foot. We were deaf to his appeals, for we had decided to release him only when the boat was already out of the roadstead and bound for the shores of the new world.

At first he protested, not without vehemence, for he was not at all equipped as regards wardrobe for such a voyage, but he soon cooled off and gaily assumed his part in the rather strenuous farce into which we had precipitated him.

"Be quiet," I said to him, "everything will come out all right."

"But how? I haven't even a spare collar with me."

His appearance was so disconsolate that I began to laugh heartily. Gaiety spreads from one person to another as easily as gloom. He began, in his turn, to laugh.

Arrived in New York we went to the best hotel in Brooklyn. The first thing that caught Pierre Mortier's eye in the hotel lobby was the unusual number of spittoons. They were everywhere, of

all sizes and shapes, for Americans do not hesitate, if they have no receptacle within easy reach, to spit on the floor, and to throw the ends of their cigars anywhere, without even taking the trouble to extinguish them.

We reached our rooms. There in an array along the wall some buckets, filled with water, attracted his attention. "Some more spittoons!" cried Mortier.

Everybody laughed, and he said in a somewhat peevish tone:

"Then what are those buckets for?"

"Why, in case of fire."

"I thought," said Mortier, "that all American buildings were fire-proof."

"That is what you hear in Paris, but houses of that sort are really very rare."

"Yet you pay enough in your country to have more comfort and security than anywhere else. For instance, that carriage just now. It was nothing short of robbery. Twenty-five francs to take us from the station here. And such an old trap! I don't understand why your laws tolerate such things."

Already he was beginning to protest. There was sure to be something else the next day.

On awakening on the first morning he pressed once on the electric button in his bedroom. A bell-boy appeared, bringing a pitcher of ice water. Thinking this a form of cheap wit Mortier sputtered

some of his worst insults, happily couched in French. The bell-boy, a huge negro, looked calmly down upon this excited little man with the fair hair and skin, and then, without asking for his tip, quietly closed the door and went away.

This attitude of unconcern was not calculated to assuage our friend's bellicose mood. He rang the bell again, and three times instead of once. That was the summons to be made when a guest wanted a boot-black sent to take his boots. Such a personage presented himself.

The personage explained to Mortier that if he touched the bell once that brought ice water; three times a boot-black. But Mortier did not understand a word of English. Accordingly the boot-black did what the bearer of ice water had done before, quite unconcernedly he went away.

Pierre Mortier was in a furious rage when a third boy presented himself, as black as the two preceding, for all the attendants are negroes in American hotels. This fellow was willing to remove his boots. Some minutes passed. Mortier was almost apoplectic with anger. The boy reappeared. He explained to his client that he gave the boots back only in return for a dollar. Mortier was still in bed. To make him understand, the negro lifted his clothes, which were folded on a chair, and, whistling, all the while, rifled the pockets. He picked out a dollar, and

put it carelessly into his own pocket. Then he left the boots on the floor and disappeared.

In a paroxysm of rage our friend dressed himself in a great hurry and went to the hotel desk, where he made the place resound with curses that no one paid any attention to since no one understood them.

On the evening of the same day Mortier put his boots outside his door in order that they might be cleaned before next morning, as is done everywhere in England and France.

In America when something is left in front of the door it is only as a sign that the object can be thrown away. Mortier never saw his shoes again.

He rang, a negro presented himself. Mortier demanded his shoes. He cried, stormed, threatened. The negro backed up against the wall and unconcernedly whistled a cakewalk.

Speechless with rage, Mortier hurled himself upon the black. The hotel negroes, especially when they are not armed, are ordinarily lacking in courage. Besides, this one had good reasons for believing that his client had gone mad. So he hastily decamped.

After that nothing could induce any one of the negroes of the establishment to enter Mortier's room as long as he remained at this hotel.

We did our best to explain to M. Mortier that the domestics were nowise in the wrong. He would not listen to a word, but kept exclaiming,

with his eyes sticking further out of his head than usual (his eyes were naturally prominent) :

" No, no ! In America you are savages, all savages. Yes, savages and thieves. It is much worse here than I had supposed."

One morning he went down alone into the restaurant for breakfast. Some minutes after we saw him bounding up the stairs. He was livid and trembling with rage. On reaching the door of our apartment, he burst out :

" This time it is too much. What is the matter with these brutes here ? Has some change come over me ? Tell me. Am I an object of ridicule ? What is the matter with me ? When I entered the restaurant a great fool looked me over from top to bottom, and said something, thereupon everybody began to stare at me. What is the trouble with me ? Tell me what is the matter ? "

What was the matter ? He wore a straw hat with very narrow brim, one of those hats called " American " in Paris and of a kind that is never worn in America. He also had " New Yorkey " trousers such as were never cut in New York. That was enough to let loose the risibilities of this Yankee public, a public that is far from being indulgent of little eccentricities in other people.

Instead of calming him our explanations exasperated him, and it was only after he had spent his violence that we succeeded in getting him down to breakfast again.

The breakfast was not extraordinarily expensive. But when he looked over his account Mortier went into a rage. He had ordered the same things that we did, and his bill was two dollars and a half, that is about twelve and a half francs, higher than ours. These twelve and a half francs represented the price of a bottle of very ordinary red wine, which he had ordered.

"Do you want me to tell you what your Americans are," he shouted. "Well, they are, and don't you forget it either, they are every one thieves, savages, hogs. They are hogs, hogs! That one word expresses it."

One morning at eight o'clock, after we had had coffee together, he left us.

"I am going to take a little walk," he said. "I shall be back in half an hour."

The half hour lasted until seven o'clock in the evening. You can imagine how anxious we became.

This is what happened.

Seeing that everybody, almost without exception, was headed in the same direction, he followed the crowd along the side walk. Presently he found himself on Brooklyn Bridge, black with people and burdened with cars, those bound to New York filled to overflowing, the others returning to Brooklyn completely empty.

Mortier did not know that all Brooklyn goes to work on the New York side, where the business

district is situated, and that everybody goes to work at the same hour in this peculiar country. Astonished, curious, a little bewildered, he followed the crowd. Once across the bridge he found himself in one of the innumerable streets of New York.

On the New York side he looked round him to establish a landmark by which he could find his way back. He did not discover one, but it seemed impossible to get lost, as he had only to return to the base of this big bridge to retrace his steps to Brooklyn. He kept on, therefore, until he had completely satisfied his curiosity. Then he retraced his steps, or at least he thought he was doing so. He looked for the bridge, but in vain. Everybody walked so quickly that his very courteous "Pardon, Monsieur," met with no response. Once or twice he made a bad effort at asking for "Brooklyn Bridge." This met with no better success.

All the while he was unable to find a policeman.

The idea occurred to him, a magnificent idea, of going into a shop. No one made the slightest effort to help him. The assistants were interested only in trying to sell him everything which the house contained. Finally he found himself in a street where there were only clothing merchants. Hardly had he set foot there when he was seized and dragged into a shop. An hour passed before Mortier could escape, more dead than alive, from

the merchant's clutches. The information he gave led us to suppose that this must have been the famous Baxter Street, the quarter in which Jewish second-hand dealers ply their trade. It was past five o'clock when he succeeded finally in regaining the bridge, and then it was only with difficulty that he got across, for it was already overcrowded with workers returning to their homes in Brooklyn.

Finally he found the hotel again, swearing that he was going to take the first steamer for Europe.

"Anywhere," he would groan; "I would rather be anywhere in the world than here. I'm not going to stay another hour in such a country. A rotten country! Rotten people!"

This time, in Pierre Mortier's eyes, we were "rotten." It would be hard to estimate how many discourteous adjectives this young man applied to our people in a short time. He must have made a record.

However, the Brooklyn hotel at which we were staying was equipped "on the European plan" with carefully chosen menus *à la carte.*

In the city to which we went later there was a purely American hotel, at which we put up. A central plate surrounded by a dozen little plates stood in front of each guest. All these were filled simultaneously with soup, entrees, fish, meat, vegetables and fruit. The guests with hasty

movements gobbled smoked salmon, roast beef, chicken, mashed potatoes, badly cooked "pie," salad, cheese, fruit, pudding, ice-cream, with apparently no regard for the effect of the hazardous mixtures on their digestive organs.

Mortier left the table completely disheartened by this spectacle.

"What are those savages made of," he said. "Upon my word they make me look back with regret to the thieves in New York. And when you consider that to urge down their hideous mixtures they incessantly guzzle ice-water and keep chewing olives, just as civilised people eat bread!"

When we returned to New York Mortier went to the Holland House, a hotel at which French was spoken, and where things were done in a manner approximating nearer to what he was accustomed to.

America—this America which on the steamer he had assured himself would be perfect—had come to interest him only in places where it had lost its own character. He found it good only in the few spots where it resembled Paris. In this was not this young journalist, after all, like most of his compatriots when they undertake to travel even in other countries than in America?

At the Holland House Pierre Mortier relaxed a little. He even became more polite in his expressions regarding America and Americans. But an incident occurred that brought the young reporter's

distaste for the country to a head, and precipitated his departure.

One day on returning to the Holland House he forgot to pay his cabman and found him ten hours later still standing in front of the hotel. His charge was a dollar and a half an hour. That meant that Mortier had to give up fifteen dollars.

Our friend thought at first the house porter should have paid for the trip, and had the charge made on his bill. Accordingly he complained at the hotel desk regarding what he called a piece of negligence.

Although the house was conducted on the French plan they gave him a thoroughly American answer :

" Well, that has nothing to do with the porter. You ordered the carriage, didn't you ? Yes. You had the use of it, didn't you ? Yes. Well, then, what do you expect ? If you don't know what you want, it isn't up to the employees to run after you to find out. They've got something else to do."

By the next steamer Pierre Mortier left the United States for good and all, swearing never again to set foot there.

Mr. W. Boosey, the English publisher, had some very different experiences in the United States.

On board the steamer he had become acquainted with a very interesting and companionable American, who invited him to lunch at Delmonico's.

"Thanks awfully," said the Englishman as he accepted. "On what day?"

"Any day you please."

That was a little vague, but Mr. Boosey assured him that he should be delighted, and would come as soon as he had a free day. He was afraid of not having said the proper thing, from the American point of view. This notion bothered him for several days.

Finally, just before sailing, he asked the American again when they should lunch together at Delmonico's.

His friend replied: "On Thursday or Saturday, whichever suits you best."

The Englishman decided on Thursday.

The day set for the lunch arrived and Mr. Boosey was prompt to keep the appointment. He asked for Mr. X., and they showed him to a table. Half-past one, two, half-past two, three o'clock, and still no American.

The Englishman, patient though he was, began to find time hanging heavily on his hands. He thought he must have made a mistake as to the day, and at last he sent for the manager.

"What," said the manager, "didn't the waiter tell you that Mr. X. had telephoned that he could not come, and that he begged you to order whatever you liked? He will attend to the account."

Imagine what the Englishman must have

thought. He had come to lunch with a gentleman, not to have his food paid for by some one. Just at that moment the American rushed into the restaurant.

"I am awfully sorry, my dear fellow, but I am glad to find you still here. I had quite forgotten about our lunch up to two o'clock, and then I telephoned. I didn't think I could get here at all. I had a deal on, one involving a million dollars, and I simply couldn't leave it. Have you had your bite? No? Well, I haven't either. Well, then, let us go and sit down."

And they sat down. Mr. Boosey will never forget his American entertainer.

The American had, it must be confessed, treated his English guest with a certain negligence. However little he may be inclined to philosophical considerations, nothing is more instructive to a thorough-going Englishman than to observe the manner in which a Yankee ordinarily observes the civilised conventions and the lofty spirit in which he also looks upon anyone who is not an American. Nothing gives him a better notion of the high opinion Americans have of themselves than to hear a Yankee say:

"Well, what are you anyway? English, I'll bet."

Then, after a profound sigh and with an indefinable sweep of the hand: "As for me," with emphasis on the "me," "I am an American."

He seems to experience genuine annoyance at having to face a man who isn't an American.

Every American thinks, without ever being guilty of profound reflection on the subject, that everybody, whatever his nationality, would have preferred first to see the light of day in the United States. For the United States, if one were to accept the cheerful American belief, is a free country whose parallel does not exist anywhere in the world.

The native American claims to have the advantage of being a citizen of the world's freest country. If you were to say to most Americans that there is a great deal of liberty in England, they would think that you were trying to make fun of them, and they would tell you that they did not believe it. They admit, occasionally, that there is a little freedom outside of the United States, but they will add :

" What a pity there isn't more of it."

The American believes himself completely emancipated, for freedom is the passion of the whole people. He pays for this catchword, which satisfies him, for having no basis of comparison he in reality does not know what he possesses and what he lacks.

The Spanish American is not less picturesque than the Anglo-Saxon American.

I had an engagement for a season at the city of Mexico. I made my first appearance at

the Grand Théâtre-National in presence of five thousand spectators. On returning to the Hotel Sands, the most beautiful hotel in the city, I found there the municipal orchestra come to serenade me.

At the end of my stay I was asked to take part in a charitable performance. The house was packed, despite the high price of the seats. After the performance a great banquet was given, under the auspices of the festival committee.

At the table I was received with an enthusiasm which was quite Mexican, and that means with an enthusiasm that could be hardly surpassed in any country of the world. Throughout the repast I kept receiving presents. Some of the women took off their bracelets, others their rings, others their brooches, and, in spite of my protestations, insisted on giving them to me.

"Absolutely at your service!"

They obliged me to take them all.

I was inexpressibly embarrassed by my booty. When I returned to the hotel I asked the clerk to put all these jewels in a safe place.

He looked at the jewels and said:

"But you will have to send them back, madam."

"Send them back? Why, they were given me."

"It is the custom here, madam. Presents are always returned."

"What am I going to do? I am leaving to-morrow morning at six o'clock, and I don't

know the names of the people who have entrusted their jewels to me."

He shook his head.

"Well, then, I don't know what to do. After all, keep them."

Next day, accordingly, when I departed, I took the precious package, thinking that we should return from Cuba, to which we were bound, by way of Mexico, and that I should then look up the owners of "my" jewels.

In Cuba all our plans were changed. We left directly for New York, with the object of returning at once to Europe. Consequently I have never given back the jewels.

I sometimes wonder what my friends of some hours must think of a woman who dared to accept, under protest, the presents that were tendered her.

While we were in Mexico I had occasion to offer a cheque payable in New York for some books I was buying

No one, absolutely no one, wanted to accept it. Then I went to the Chief of Police, General Carbadjadoes, whom I knew and he telegraphed to a New York bank, from which the reply was received that, "Loie Fuller's cheques are perfectly good."

That put an end to any reluctance among the merchants, who afterward, on the contrary, overwhelmed me with all sorts of propositions.

My most vivid impressions of Mexico were of the abounding and well-regulated enthusiasm of the upper classes and the extraordinary insolence of the tradespeople. The whole character of the country is expressed in these two traits.

On the liner that took us to the United States Pierre Mortier, for I shall have to mention him once more, made the acquaintance of a young Roumanian, who seemed to be a well-bred man, a very well-bred man. In Mortier enthusiasm is as easily evoked as is condemnation, and he presented this man to me in a most cordial manner.

Upon our arrival the young man said to me:

"I have so many little parcels that I don't know where to put them. Would you do me the great favour of taking care of this one?"

I gave the object to my maid, who put it in my travelling case, and it passed the inspection of the customs-house officer.

That evening at the hotel the young man called on me with Mortier, and I gave him back his package.

He opened it smiling, and showed me the contents.

I had fraudulently brought in a bag of uncut rubies.

I treated the Roumanian as a cheat and told him that if he did not make the matter right with the customs I should hand him over to the authorities. Smiling all the while he promised

that, since I took the affair to heart, he would go and make his peace, and he left.

I never saw him or his rubies again, it is needless to say.

I believe that from this time forward they have been seeking me in vain to charge me with smuggling a package through the customs-house.

XXII

GAB

FOR eight years Gab and I have lived together on terms of the greatest intimacy, like two sisters. Gab is much younger than I and regards me with deep affection.

Often I look at her curiously. She seems to read what is in my face and replies to my mute interrogation.

"You cannot understand me. You are Saxon and I am Latin."

When I survey her I find myself thinking as she thinks, and I wonder if there exists a way of comprehending that we Anglo-Saxons do not possess. Gab is deeply serious. She has long, black eyes which seem to slumber perpetually. When she walks, despite her youth, she proceeds with slow and protracted steps, which give you an impression that she must be of a serious and meditative nature.

When I became acquainted with her she wa living in a dark little apartment, furnished in Hindu style, where in her black velvet costume she looked like some Byzantine princess. Jean Aicard, the poet, said one day that her voice

is of velvet, her skin and locks are of velvet, her eyes are of velvet and her name ought to be *Velours*. If one could compare her to a living creature a boa constrictor would be most appropriate, for her movements are like those of a snake. There is nothing sinuous, nothing rampant about them, but the *ensemble* of her motions suggests the suppleness of the young adder.

I knew Gab for at least two years before it entered into my head that she was fond of me. She was always so calm, so silent, so undemonstrative, so unlike any other human being that only a supernatural personality, it seemed, would ever be able to understand her.

Her eyes and her hair are just alike, deep black and very brilliant. In her presence people never know for certain whether she is looking at them or not. Yet nothing about them escapes her, and through her half-closed eyes she penetrates to the very depths of their souls. She is neither tall nor slight, neither plump nor thin. Her skin is like alabaster, her abundant locks are parted in the middle and brought together in a knot behind the head, just as our grandmothers did their hair. Her teeth are small, regular and white as pearls. Her nose is straight and graceful. Her face is full and her head is so large that she never finds quite hair enough to dress it with.

When Gab was a baby she had as playmates

a donkey, a pony and an army of lead soldiers, including Napoleon in his various aspects, with horses, rifles and wooden cannon. When I became acquainted with her she still had with her the nurse who had taken her mother's place. This woman told me that Gab used to make her play horse while she took the part of Napoleon, until the poor nurse staggered with fatigue. She told me again that Gab was so shy that when her mother received a visitor, if the child were in the drawing-room and there was no way of escape, the little one would hide herself behind a curtain and would not budge until the intruder went away. Her mother was so much concerned with what she called the child's timidity that she was unwilling to force her in any way. Gab subsequently has explained to me that she was not afraid and was not timid, but the truth was she could not endure certain people and that she did not wish to be obliged to see those who annoyed her.

She is just the same to-day. For years whenever a visitor came in by one door she would go out by another, and it made no difference whether the person came for a long call or for only a single word. At lunch or at dinner nothing could, and nothing can, induce Gab to meet people.

Gab has an iron will. Her nurse told me that one day on a journey with her parents Gab, who was then a very small girl, wanted to have a

Photo *Tabler*

GAB

donkey that was running along the railway track. She cried for the donkey and did not cease until they had found the beast and bought it for her.

Gab has rarely to be corrected. It seems as if some one had taught her all the politeness in the world, and all the seriousness as well. When nine years old she was reading Schopenhauer. At fourteen she was carrying on special research among the archives of the State police. At sixteen she was studying the literature of ancient India. At eighteen she published a manuscript she had found after her mother's death. She spent her pocket money to have it published. The title of the book was *Au Loin*, and Jean Lorrain declared that it was the most beautiful book on India which he had ever read.

Gab's mother must have written this book during her journey in India, for a short time before her death she had visited this interesting country, and had gained access to private houses and courts to which Europeans are not ordinarily admitted. She was a marvellously beautiful woman, and made a great sensation in a country in which beauty is held in high regard.

The story goes that one evening at a ball in the viceroy's palace, to which she had been invited, her entrance made such a sensation that all the couples, forgetting that they were there to dance, stopped and came forward to admire her radiant beauty.

When she died those who attended her funeral wept like children, saying that she was too beautiful to have been an ordinary mortal, and that there was something supernatural in her countenance.

All her life she had been called the beautiful Mme. X.

At the time of my debut at the Folies-Bergère Gab was fourteen years old. One day her mother said to her : " There is a new foreign dancer whom everybody is going to see. We will see her at a matinee."

On reaching the theatre to buy seats the day before the performance they asked about me at the ticket office. Gab's mother, whose beauty captivated everybody, had no trouble in getting all the information she wanted. The following dialogue ensued :

" Is she pretty ? " asked Gab's mother.

" No, she is not pretty," was the reply.

" Is she common, ordinary ? "

" No, she has an individuality of her own."

" Tall ? "

" Rather slight than tall."

" Is she young ? "

" Yes, I suppose so, but I could not swear to it."

" Is she brunette or blonde ? "

" She has brown hair and blue eyes, very blue."

" Is she smart ? "

" Oh, no. Not smart. She is anything but

that. She is a queer sort of girl who seems to think of nothing but her work."

"Is she retiring?"

"Well, yes. She knows nobody and sees nobody. She has continued to be quite unacquainted in Paris. She lives on the third storey at the end of a court in a house to the rear of the Folies-Bergère, and she never goes out unless with the manager of the theatre or his wife and with her mother, who never leaves her."

"Does her dancing weary her greatly?"

"After the dance she is so tired that they have to carry her home and she goes to bed at once. The first time she came here she stayed at the Grand Hotel, but the manager has given her the *appartement* of which I have been speaking. He has had a door let in at the rear of the stage, so that she can return to her rooms without having to go upon the street. She remains forty-five minutes on the stage. The white dance alone lasts eleven minutes. That is very fatiguing for her; she sticks at it too long, but the public is never willing to let her stop."

"Is she amiable?"

"Well, she does not know a word of French, but she smiles all the time, and says, 'bong-jour.'"

At this moment the manager, M. Marchand, who had come near the ticket office, and who fell victim to the irresistible charm of Gab's mother, joined in the conversation.

"She is a very complex personality, Miss Loie Fuller," he said. "She has no patience but displays nevertheless an incredible amount of perseverance. She is always rehearsing with her electric apparatus, engaged in search of new effects, and she sometimes keeps her electricians at work until six o'clock in the morning. No one would venture to make the slightest suggestion to her about this; overwork seems to agree with her. She stops neither for dinner nor for supper. She is endlessly seeking for combinations of light and colour."

Then he added, as if aside:

"They are queer people, these Americans."

Gab's mother then asked about my studies and my ideas.

"She has just been interviewed on this subject, and the interview was published this morning. Among other things she said, in speaking of the effect that she obtains: 'Everybody knows when it is successful, but no one realises how one has to keep at it to succeed. That is what I am after unceasingly.' The interviewer asked her if there was no established system, no books that could help her in her work. She looked astonished and replied, 'I do not see how any one could use words to indicate the rays of light in their imperceptible and unceasing interplay that is changing all the time.'"

My manager then drew the newspaper from

his pocket and read this passage from my exposition :

" ' One needs to have order in one's thinking to be able to write. One can feel rays of light, in disintegration or in transition only as one feels heat or cold. One cannot tell in words what one feels. Sensations are not thoughts.' "

" ' But music, for example, can be reduced to notation.' "

" This seemed to surprise her. She was silent, reflected a moment, and then said :

" ' I ought to think about that, but it seems to me that the vibration represented by sight is a finer sense, more indefinite, more fugitive, than that of sound. Sounds have a more fixed character and they are limited. As for sight it has no limit, or none at least that we recognise. In any case we are more ignorant of things that concern our eyes than those which address themselves to our ears. Perhaps this is because our eyes from infancy are better developed at an earlier stage, and because seeing is a faculty the young child exercises sooner than hearing. The field of visual harmony as compared with aural harmony is like sunshine in comparison with moonlight. That is why there took place in the human brain a great development of the sense of sight, long before we were able to direct it or even to understand the results or the uses of it.' "

" Those who watch Loie Fuller during her work,"

continued M. Marchand, after he had put the paper back into his pocket, "are struck by the transformation that takes place in her as she speaks, or as she directs her men to try this experiment or that. In point of fact, Madame, she has transformed the Folies-Bergère. Every evening the usual audience is lost amid a crowd composed of scholars, painters, sculptors, writers and ambassadors, and at the matinees there is a crowd of women and children. All the chairs and tables of the galleries have been piled up behind the orchestra chairs and all the people, forgetful of their rank and dignity, climb over them like a crowd of urchins. All that for a young girl who does not seem to suspect that she has won success. Would you like an example? Lately my wife took her to a large store to buy some handkerchiefs. The first thing Miss Fuller saw was some handkerchiefs marked 'Loie Fuller,' and she was surprised to note that some one had the same name as hers. When they told her: 'Why, not at all. It is your name that appears on these handkerchiefs,' she replied:

"'How can that be? These people don't know me.'

"She did not understand and could not understand that it was on account of her success."

Gab's mother, after acknowledging the manager's salutation as he said good-bye, again asked the ticket office men:

Photo Lafitte

THE DANCE OF FIRE

"She is a proper person, then?"

"Good Heavens, yes. She is so middle class that she looks like a little country girl. I suspect that she has never dreamed of trying to be swell. She came here with a valise and a little steamer trunk, and dressed as in this photograph," he added, showing the portrait I had given him.

This photograph depicted me in a yachting cap, a straight-cut dress of indefinite colour, and supported by straps. A light underwaist, a short jacket and a very simple cape completed my costume.

After seeing this Gab and her mother went home with their seats for next day's matinee. This matinee impressed Gab to such a degree that on reaching home this child of fourteen wrote the following lines in my honour:

"A luminous and impalpable shadow. Across the dark brown night flits a pallid, palpitating reflection. And while petals fly in the air a supernatural golden flower rises toward the sky. It is not a sister of the terrestrial flowers which shed their dream particles upon our aching souls. Like them the gigantic flower brings no consolation. It grew in a strange region under the moon's blue rays. Life beats in its transparent stem, and its clear leaves hang loosely in the shade like great tormented arms. Just a dream efflorescence displays itself and meditates. It is the flower's

living poetry that sings there, delicate, fugitive and mysterious.

"It is the unsullied firmament, bestrewn with stars and it is the dance of fire.

"A crackling flame is kindled. It turns and twists and glows. Smoke, heavy as an incense, rises and mingles in the darkness where embers glow. In the midst of the tumult, licked by torrents of foaming fire, a mask, also a strange flame, is outlined in the reddish air. The flames die into a single flame, which grows to immensity. You might think that human thought were rending itself in the darkness. And we await with anxious hearts the beauty that passes.

"Soul of the flowers, soul of the sky, soul of flame, Loie Fuller has given them to us. Words and phrases avail nothing. She has created the soul of the dance, for until Loie Fuller came the dance was without soul!

"It had no soul in Greece when among fair wheat heads on days flooded with sunshine beautiful children danced gaily, brandishing their golden sickles. Rigid, majestic, and somewhat too formal, it had no soul under the Grand Monarch. It had no soul when it might have had one. The eighteenth century dances, the minuet in a whirl of powder; the waltz is only an embrace, the woman cult revived.

"The soul of the dance was destined to be born in this sad and feverish age. Loie Fuller modelled

form out of a dream. Our foolish desires, our dread of mere nothing, these she expressed in her dance of fire. To satisfy our thirst for oblivion she humanised the flowers. Happier than her brothers, the lords of creation, she caused her silent deeds to live and in the darkness, this setting of grandeur, no human defect marred her beauty. Providence shows itself kindly toward her. In its great secret Loie shares.

" Amorous of the resplendent beauty in nature she asks it questions out of her clear eyes. To seize the unknown her hand becomes coaxing. Her firm, precise glance penetrates the soul of things even when they have none. The inanimate becomes animate, and thinks under her magical desire, and the ' dream pantomime ' is evolved.

" Charmingly womanly she has chosen the sweetest and finest among sleeping lives. She is the butterfly, she is the fire, she is light, heaven, the stars. Frail, under floating material, flowery with pale gold, with calcedony and beryl, Salome passed in her power. Afterwards humanity went by feverishly. To calm our frayed souls and our childish nightmares a fragile figure dances in a celestial robe."

And now, fifteen years after, Gab still tells me, when we speak of the impression I made on her at the time she wrote these pages full of ingenuous emotion,

" I never see you exactly as you are," she says, " but as you seemed to me on that day."

I wonder if her friendship, so well founded and positive, is not intimately mingled with the love of form, of colour and of light, which I interpreted synthetically before her eyes when I appeared before her for the first time.

XXIII

THE VALUE OF A NAME

WHEN in the autumn of 1892 I appeared for the first time at the Folies-Bergère I knew no one, absolutely no one, in Paris. Imagine then my surprise upon receiving one day a visiting card from one of the spectators on which these words were written in lead pencil :

" Oh, well, old girl, I am fiercely glad to see that you have tapped the till. We are here, a whole gang of us, two boxes full, and we want you to join us after the performance.

Your old pal."

The card bore a name with which I was unacquainted.

This was some practical joke, or else the call-boy had made a slip in the address. I continued my disrobing without considering the matter further.

All at once a gentleman rushed into my dressing-room.

" Well, Mollie, my old girl, why don't you reply to a comrade's letter ? "

But on seeing me in street costume he stopped short and cried :

" Well, but who are you ? I thought you were Mollie Fuller ! "

Then I understood that he had taken me for one of his old friends.

" I know whom you mean," I answered, " but I am not Mollie Fuller. Mollie Fuller is very well known in the United States, where she is imitating my dances. We are often mistaken for each other, but you must realise that this isn't the same person."

The gentleman was tall, stout, very dark, of distinguished appearance, with a certain odd defect in one of his eyes. He wore a full beard.

I shall never forget his aspect as he apologised. Without asking me again to join his " gang " he disappeared even more quickly than he had entered.

I often encountered him after that, and he always greeted me very respectfully. From my window looking upon the courtyard of a great hotel in London I have even been present at a dinner—such a dinner as had never before been seen there—given by this same gentleman. Caruso sang. The courtyard of the hotel had been transformed into a lake, and the host and his guests dined in gondolas. From my window I watched the banquet and I thought of the other supper to

which I had been invited involuntarily. The world is so small !

I did not become the well-known Loie Fuller without, as is easily realised, being involved in some little adventures. I had once played the part of Jack Sheppard in the drama of that name. Our company stopped in Philadelphia. My father and mother were with me, and we took our meals in a very modest boarding-house.

Some years after I returned, as a dancer, to this same city, and at the hotel at which I registered, it was one of the largest of the city, I was refused admittance. Without taking the trouble to ask why, I went elsewhere. But I thought over this irritating reception and as I could not understand it I returned to the hotel in question and asked to speak to the manager. On seeing me he looked amazed :

" But you are not Loie Fuller."

I assured him that I certainly was Loie Fuller, and asked why he had been unwilling to receive me in his hotel.

He told me the following story.

" When you were playing Jack Sheppard one of the ladies of the company stayed here with Mr. Z. One day they had such a quarrel that I was obliged to ask them to vacate. This lady was registered under the name of Miss Fuller."

I had absolutely no idea who the person could be and I was trying to find out when at the theatre

some one brought me the card of a gentleman who wanted to see me.

His name was quite unfamiliar. This gentleman, however, might have been sent by a friend. Accordingly I received him. A tall gentleman entered, and, very much surprised, repeated the hotel man's affirmation :

" But you are not Loie Fuller ! "

I assured him that I was.

He had known the " Loie Fuller " who had been entertained in my stead at the hotel and who sang in the chorus of " Jack Sheppard," the play of which I was playing the principal part. He wanted to see her in her new incarnation and renew his acquaintance with her. When I had at last shown him his mistake he allowed me to see the counterfeit Loie Fuller's picture. And as a matter of fact when we were made up for the stage there was a little resemblance.

One day we were giving some performances at Lyons. On arriving at the theatre one of my electricians said to me :

" The proprietress of the hotel where I am staying with my comrades is greatly annoyed. She says that you lived with her at the time of your last trip to Lyons. You were very well satisfied and promised to come again, and yet you have not come. She declares that it isn't nice of you to show yourself so haughty under the pretext that now you are successful."

Everybody who is acquainted with me knows that such conduct is not at all characteristic of me. I was, therefore, very much surprised, I was unable to recall the name of the hotel the electrician mentioned. I asked him, therefore, to find out at what period I had put up at the hostelry of the good lady whose grievance he had just forwarded to me.

The next day he told me the date. Now at that period I was at Bucharest. I was, therefore, more perplexed than ever, and I asked the electrician to continue his inquiry and to do his best to straighten out the difficulty.

"My landlady," he said, "is sure that it was you. She saw you at the theatre. It is the same dance and she bade me say again that she 'is very much astonished at Miss Fuller's conduct.' You were so well satisfied with her house, both you and the gentleman with you."

I then went to the hotel to show the landlady that she was mistaken. She then made me look at the photograph of a woman who imitates everything that I do, passes her life watching over each one of my creations and follows me everywhere, whether to London, to New York, to Paris or Berlin.

In addition to these rare adventures that come to my knowledge, how many others are there that I shall never know about ?

I never arrive in a town without Loie Fuller's

having been there in advance of me, and even in Paris I have seen announced in flamboyant letters, "Loie Fuller, radiant dances," and I have been able to see with my own eyes "la Loie Fuller" dance before my face.

When I went to South America I discovered that there, too, Loie Fuller had been ahead of me.

What I often wonder is what "imitations" in private life are perpetrated by these ladies, who are embarrassed by no scruples.

So I am not the woman, perhaps my word will be taken for it, who, of all the world, is most appreciative of the value of a name. I might add that the American chorus girl of whom I have been writing came to Paris and that one day her lover left her there. Alone, without friends, without a cent, ill, she sent for me.

Did I help her ?

I am afraid I did. When we see a dog in the street dying of hunger, we give him something to eat, and not in order that he may not bite us, not in order that he may be grateful to us ; we give him something to eat because he is hungry.

XXIV

HOW M. CLARETIE INDUCED ME TO WRITE THIS BOOK

ONE evening during the Exposition of 1900 M. and Mme. Jules Claretie came to my little theatre in the Rue de Paris, to see Sada Yacco in her famous death-scene. After the performance they came behind the scenes, where I was presented to them.

Several years passed and I became interested, as I have explained, in a little Japanese artist, Hanako. I remembered how Sada Yacco had pleased the Clareties, and I asked them to come and see my new Japanese star. After the performance they came to the dressing-room of the dearest little actress in the world, and I had the pleasure of receiving them there.

Some days later I received an invitation to lunch with M. and Mme. Claretie. It was extended to little Hanako and myself. The day arrived, and we set forth. Hanako appeared to be quite unaware that she was going to lunch with a celebrated writer, and experienced no excitement at the idea of paying a visit to the director of the world's first theatre. I had lived in Paris long

enough to be able to group people according to their standing, and I was, for my part, somewhat confused. Hanako was curious only as regards the things she was going to see, since all intercourse with others was barred from the fact that she spoke only Japanese. Indeed, it was because she knew it would please me, and because I had expressly begged her to do so, was she willing to come to this lunch. She was charming, with her odd little wooden sandals, which she called her shoes, and her robes worn one over the other. She gave an impression of nothing lacking. Hanako is so exquisite that it is difficult to draw her likeness. Her stature is so slight that she barely reaches a tall man's waist.

Mme. Claretie received us so cordially that we were at once glad we came. Then M. Claretie came in, very refined and very simple. He was accompanied by M. Prudhon, an impressive person, who did not utter a word. He was presented to me as the director's right-hand man. I wondered how it was possible to carry on business without saying anything. From noon until three o'clock, as a matter of fact, I did not hear a single word escape his lips. At the table I asked Mme. Claretie, in an undertone in English :

" Is he dumb ? "

She began to laugh in her friendly and reassuring way and replied :

"Oh, no, but he never has much to say."

Then, thinking the ice broken, I looked at M. Prudhon smiling. He did not smile at all, and I said to him vivaciously:

"If you continue to contradict me in that way I won't say another word to you."

M. Prudhon, still serious, bowed and had nothing to say.

This quip, which did not even make him smile, was not an original one with me, I make haste to say. I had heard it said by a young girl who was my private secretary, and who wanted to stir up a gentleman who was unpleasantly silent. M. Prudhon reminded me of that man, and I wanted to see what effect the remark would have on him. It had no effect.

While I am speaking of this secretary I ought to devote a few lines to her, although I have no reason to remember her kindly. She was a pretty, young girl, always exquisitely gowned, although her financial resources were slight. To my extreme displeasure I found out later the explanation of the enigma.

She was my secretary, and I often sent her to place orders among all my tradespeople. At the same time that she gave orders for things that I wanted she ordered them for herself, taking care not to call for two articles of the same make. I never had gloves or veils or handkerchiefs. She always had taken the last of them. She always

thought that she had ordered more of them, and would sally forth to order more.

One day I sent her to Tiffany's, the jewellers. She added only a mere little trinket to my order, a locket with her monogram set in diamonds. I received the bill in due course, but she had left me. Previously she had gone with me to Nice, and had remained there while I was on the road in the United States. When I returned I learned that during my absence she had lived at the hotel where I left her and that her bill, charged to my account, amounted to nearly 6,000 francs.

Presently other invoices arrived from dyers and cleaners, glove makers, shoemakers, costumiers, modistes, furriers, linendrapers and finally the bill from Tiffany's.

But the limit was reached when a student from the Beaux Arts asked me if I could not return him sixty-six francs which he had lent me two years before through the medium of my pretty secretary. Next there came a gentleman from London, one whom I held in too great esteem to go into details, who asked me for ten pounds sterling which he had loaned me, again through the medium of my clever and well-dressed secretary.

But in speaking of my troubles I am liable to forget my lunch with the Clareties.

As we were about to sit down Mme. Claretie brought in an elderly woman of very pleasant

appearance. I have rarely seen motions easier, more simple or more harmonious. Leaning against each other they made a delightful picture. Mme. Claretie presented me to her mother. I asked how she was.

"Oh, I am very well," she replied, "my eyes are my only trouble. I cannot read without glasses, and the glasses annoy me a great deal."

She had always been very fond of reading, and could not bring herself to the idea of reading no more. I sympathised with her and told her so. Then suddenly it occurred to me to ask her how old she was.

"Ninety-five years," she replied.

And she was complaining of not being able to read any longer without glasses!

We spoke of her grandchildren and her great grandchildren. I asked her if the happiness of being surrounded by so many affectionate people did not bring large compensation for the infirmities of age.

She replied:

"I love my children and my grandchildren, and I live in them. But that does not restore to me my eyesight. It is terrible not to be able to see."

And she was right. Love gave her strength to bear her misfortune, but she feared that the prison of darkness would claim her as its prey. Before going to the dining-room she had taken her daughter's arm. She had no assistance on

the other hand in eating. Her good humour was unvarying.

She took some knitting from a work-basket, and said in a firm voice:

"I must work. I can no longer see well enough to be sure that my knitting is well done, but I have to keep busy, nevertheless."

Mme. Claretie asked me if I was acquainted with Alexandre Dumas.

I told her how I had chanced to meet him. Then M. Claretie asked me numerous questions, which I tried to evade in order not to seem to talk about myself all the time. Imagine my astonishment when next morning I read in the *Temps* an article, a column and a half long, devoted entirely to our visit at M. Claretie's and signed by the gentleman himself.

"Mme. Hanako," he wrote, "is in town, a little person, delightfully odd and charming. In her blue or green robes, embroidered with flowers of many colours, she is like a costly doll, or a prettily animated idol, which should have a bird's voice. The sculptor Rodin may possibly show us her refined features and keen eyes at the next Salon, for he is occupied just now with a study of her, and I believe a statue of the comedienne. He has never had a better model. These Japanese, who are so energetic, leaping into the fray like the ants upon a tree trunk, are likewise capable of the most complete immobility and the greatest

patience. These divergent qualities constitute the strength of their race.

"Mme. Hanako, whom I saw and applauded in 'The Martyr' at the Opera, came to see me, through the kindness of Miss Loie Fuller, who discovered Sada Yacco for us some years ago. It is delightful to see at close hand and in so attractive a guise this little creature, who looks so frightful when, with convulsed eyes, she mimics the death agony. There is a pretty smile on the lips which at the theatre are curled under the pain of hara-kiri. She made me think of Orestes exhibiting the funeral urn to Electra: 'As you see, we bring the little remnants in a little urn.'

"Loie Fuller, who was a soubrette before being the goddess of light, an enchantress of strange visions, has become enamoured of this dramatic Japanese art and has popularised it everywhere, through Sada Yacco and then through Mme. Hanako. I have always observed that Loie Fuller has a very keen intelligence. I am not surprised that Alexandre Dumas said to me: 'She ought to write out her impressions and her memories.' I should like to hear from her how she first conceived these radiant dances, of which the public has never grown tired, and which she has just begun again at the Hippodrome. She is, however, more ready to talk philosophy than the stage. Gaily, with her blue eye and her faun-like smile, she replied to my question: 'It's just

chance. The light came to me. I didn't have to go to it.' "

I apologize for reproducing these eulogistic words. I have even suppressed certain passages, for M. Claretie was very complimentary. It was, however, absolutely necessary that I should make this citation, since out of it grew the present book.

M. Claretie had quoted Dumas' opinion. He returned to the charge.

Soon after, in fact, I received a letter from M. Claretie urging me to begin my "memoirs." Perhaps he was right, but I hardly dared undertake such a terrible task all alone. It looked so formidable to write a book, and a book about myself!

One afternoon I called on Mme. Claretie. A number of pleasant people were there and, after Mme. Claretie had mentioned this notion of "memoirs" which her husband, following Dumas' lead, had favoured, they all began to ask me questions about myself, my art and the steps by which I had created it. Everyone tried to encourage me to undertake the work.

A short time after this Mme. Claretie sent me tickets for her box at the Théâtre-Français. I went there with several friends. There were twelve of us, among whom was Mrs. Mason, wife of the American Consul-General, who is the most remarkable statesman I have ever known, and the best diplomatist of the service.

In return for the Claretie's' kindness I invited them to be present at one of my rehearsals of 'Salome." They were good enough to accept my invitation and one evening they arrived at the Théâtre des Arts while I was at work. Later I came forward to join them. We stood in the gloom of a dimly lighted hall. The orchestra was rehearsing. All at once a dispute arose between the musical composer and the orchestra leader. The composer said :

" They don't do it that way at the Opera."

Thereupon the young orchestra leader replied :

" Don't speak to me of subsidised theatres. There's nothing more imbecile anywhere."

He laid great stress on the words " subsidised " and " imbecile."

M. Claretie asked me who this young man was. I had not heard exactly what he said. Nevertheless, as I knew something embarrassing had occurred, I tried to excuse him, alleging that he had been rehearsing all day, that half his musicians had deserted to take positions at the Opera and that they had left him only the understudies.

M. Claretie, whose good nature is proverbial, paid no attention to the incident. Several days later, indeed, on November 5, 1907, he wrote for the *Temps* a long article, which is more eulogistic than I deserve, but which I cite because it gives an impression of my work at a rehearsal.

"The other evening," he wrote, "I had, as it were, a vision of a theatre of the future, something of the nature of a feministic theatre.

"Women are more and more taking men's places. They are steadily supplanting the so-called stronger sex. The court-house swarms with women lawyers. The literature of imagination and observation will soon belong to women of letters. In spite of man's declaration that there shall be no woman doctor for him the female physician continues to pass her examinations and brilliantly. Just watch and you will see woman growing in influence and power; and if, as in Gladstone's phrase, the nineteenth century was the working-man's century, the twentieth will be the women's century.

"I have been at the Théâtre des Arts, Boulevard des Batignolles, at a private rehearsal, which Miss Loie Fuller invited me to attend. She is about to present there to-morrow a 'mute drama'—we used to call it a pantomime—the *Tragedie de Salome*, by M. Robert d'Humières, who has rivalled Rudyard Kipling in translating it. Loie Fuller will show several new dances there: the dance of pearls, in which she entwines herself in strings of pearls taken from the coffin of Herodias; the snake dance, which she performs in the midst of a wild incantation; the dance of steel, the dance of silver, and the dance of fright, which causes her to flee, panic-stricken, from the sight of John's

THE DANCE OF FEAR FROM "SALOME"

decapitated head persistently following her and surveying her with martyred eyes.

"Loie Fuller has made studies in a special laboratory of all the effects of light that transform the stage, with the Dead Sea, seen from a height, and the terraces of Herod's palace. She has succeeded, by means of various projections, in giving the actual appearance of the storm, a glimpse of the moonbeams cast upon the waves, of the horror of a sea of blood. Of Mount Nebo, where Moses, dying, hailed the promised land, and the hills of Moab which border the horizon, fade into each other where night envelops them. The light in a weird way changes the appearance of the picturesque country. Clouds traverse the sky. Waves break or become smooth as a surface of mother-of-pearl. The electric apparatus is so arranged that a signal effects magical changes.

"We shall view miracles of light ere long at the theatre. When M. Fortuny, son of the distinguished Spanish artist, has realised 'his theatre' we shall have glorious visions. Little by little the scenery encroaches upon the stage, and perhaps beautiful verses, well pronounced, will be worthy of all these marvels.

"It is certain that new capacities are developing in theatrical art, and that Miss Loie Fuller will have been responsible for an important contribution. I should not venture to say how she has created her light effects. She has actually been turned

out by her landlord because of an explosion in her apparatus. Had she not been so well known she would have been taken for an anarchist. At this theatre, Rue des Batignolles, where I once witnessed the direst of melodramas that ever made popular audiences shiver, at this theatre, which has become elegant and sumptuous with its handsome, modernised decorations, at the Théâtre des Arts, she has installed her footlights, her electric lamps, all this visual fairyland which she has invented and perfected, which has made of her a unique personality, an independent creator, a revolutionist in art.

"There, on that evening when I saw her rehearse Salome in everyday clothes, without costume, her glasses over her eyes, measuring her steps, outlining in her dark robe the seductive and suggestive movements, which she will produce to-morrow in her brilliant costume, I seemed to be watching a wonderful *impresaria*, manager of her troupe as well as mistress of the audience, giving her directions to the orchestra, to the mechanicians, with an exquisite politeness, smiling in face of the inevitable nerve-racking circumstances, always good-natured and making herself obeyed, as all real leaders do, by giving orders in a tone that sounds like asking a favour.

"'Will you be good enough to give us a little more light? Yes. That is it. Thank you.'

"On the stage another woman in street dress,

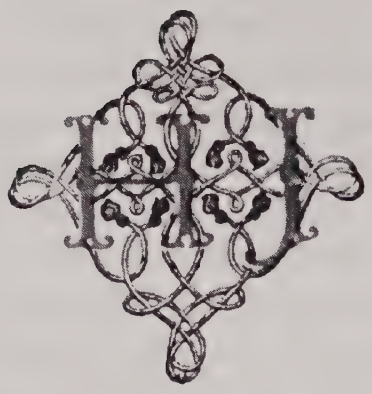
with a note-book in her hand, very amiable, too, and very exact in her directions and questions, took the parts of John the Baptist, half nude, of Herod in his purple mantle, of Herodias magnificent under her veils, and assumed the function of *regisseur* (one cannot yet say *regisserice*). And I was struck by the smoothness of all this performance of a complicated piece, with its movements and various changes. These two American women, without raising their voices, quietly but with the absolute brevity of practical people (distrust at the theatre those who talk too much), these two women with their little hands fashioned for command were managing the rehearsal as an expert Amazon drives a restive horse.

"Then I had the immense pleasure of seeing this Salome in everyday clothes dance her steps without the illusion created by theatrical costume, with a simple strip of stuff, sometimes red and sometimes green, for the purpose of studying the reflections on the moving folds under the electric light. It was Salome dancing, but a Salome in a short skirt, a Salome with a jacket over her shoulders, a Salome in a tailor-made dress, whose hands—mobile, expressive, tender or threatening hands, white hands, hands like the tips of birds' wings—emerged from the clothes, imparted to them all the poetry of the dance, of the seductive dance or the dance of fright, the infernal dance or the dance of delight. The gleam from the

footlights reflected itself on the dancer's glasses and blazed there like flame, like fugitive flashes, and nothing could be at once more fantastic and more charming than these twists of the body, these caressing motions, these hands, again, these dream hands waving there before Herod, superb in his theatrical mantle, and observing the sight of the dance idealised in the everyday costume.

"I can well believe that Loie Fuller's Salome is destined to add a Salome unforeseen of all the Salomes that we have been privileged to see. With M. Florent Schmitt's music she connects the wonders of her luminous effects. This woman, who has so profoundly influenced the modes, the tone of materials, has discovered still further effects, and I can imagine the picturesqueness of the movements when she envelops herself with the black serpents which she used the other evening only among the accessories behind the scenes."

That evening between the two scenes, M. Claretie again spoke of my book; and, to sum up, it is thanks to his insistence that I decided to dip my pen in the inkwell and to begin these "memoirs." It was a long task, this book was, long and formidable for me. And so many little incidents, sometimes comic and sometimes tragic, have already recurred during the making of this manuscript that they might alone suffice to fill a second volume.



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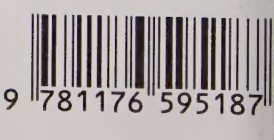

LEARNING AND INFORMATION
WITHDRAWN

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